

Nathan meets Hamas activist

OCCUPIED GAZA (R) — Israeli peace activist Abie Nathan met a prominent Hamas activist on Saturday in a bid to unite Palestinian groups before a proposed Middle East peace conference. Mr. Nathan, facing charges for meeting Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in violation of Israeli law, said it was his first meeting with an Islamic activist. He met Mahmud Azhar, a 46-year-old surgeon and supporter of the outlawed Islamic Resistance Movement known as Hamas. Mr. Nathan, a popular broadcaster who founded the "Voice of Peace" radio station, told reporters after the meeting he wanted to "unite the Palestinian front to negotiate for peace." He has previously served a prison term for breaking a law barring contacts with the PLO. Hamas rivals the PLO-backed Unified Leadership of the Uprising for control of the 44-month-old uprising. It has officially rejected U.S.-proposed peace talks with Israel.

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Transfer of Kuwaiti gold completed

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Iraq has returned all 3,216 gold bars taken from Kuwait during the Gulf War and has begun sending commemorative coins back to Kuwait, a U.N. diplomat said Saturday. Richard Foran, a U.N. assistant secretary-general who is coordinating the transfer, said all of the gold was back in Kuwait's central bank vaults as of Thursday. The gold, weighing some 40 tonnes, has been valued at \$650 million. He said commemorative coin sets were on the way, via the Saudi Arabian border city of Arar. "On Monday we start bank notes, then Kuwaiti coins," he said. He said he expected the transfers via Arar to be completed by the end of this month and gave a date of Sept. 14 for the start of the transfer of museum pieces and the national library. "We are very pleased with the gold," Mr. Foran said. "All this was handled in an extremely professional way. It could not have been better." Austrian bank experts were on hand at Arar to weigh the gold, and both Iraqi and Kuwaiti delegates signed off on the assessments.

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Iraq restores limited int'l phone service

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq Saturday restored limited international telephone service after more than six months without phone lines to the outside world, the Iraqi News Agency reported. The agency, monitored in Cyprus, said 48 international lines were now available. Iraq's communications network was a key target of coalition bombers during the Gulf war. Internal and international phone circuits were heavily damaged. Since then, the only phone circuits available were from portable satellite phones brought in by visiting journalists and other officials. The Iraqi agency did not say which countries could be called on the restored lines.

Israel tests anti-missile missile

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel successfully test launched an anti-missile missile being developed for its navy, an Israeli Aircraft Industry (IAI) spokesman said Saturday. It was the first test in sea conditions of the Barak (lightning) missile being developed by IAI, he said. The 96-kilogramme missile is suitable for smaller missile boats and large warships, IAI said in a statement. It has a range of up to 12 kilometres and can travel up to twice the speed of sound. The IAI spokesman would not say when the test took place and refused to provide additional details on the Barak.

Sudan: U.S. mediation only through Nigeria

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudan's military government Saturday rejected direct U.S. mediation in its long southern civil war but said it remains ready for an African-led peace process. And Colonel Mohammed Al Amin Khalifa, the junta member responsible for negotiating a diplomatic solution to the ruinous eight-year-old conflict, said the army never has been more capable of winning. Col. Khalifa said the United States or anybody else who wants to mediate should do it through President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria, current chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). He said Herman Cohen, the assistant U.S. secretary of state for African affairs, recently asserted that direct intervention by Washington is no longer needed. While Omar Hassan Al Bashir's government welcomes help in the search for peace, Col. Khalifa said, it wants it only through Mr. Babangida.

Pakistani police bust gang

KARACHI (R) — Pakistani police said on Saturday they had smashed an eight-strong Karachi gang involved in kidnapping, a dozen people and stealing 200 cars and motorcycles. A spokesman said the gang belonged to the clandestine Al Zulfiqar group which authorities say is led from exile in Syria by Murtaza Bhutto, brother of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Officials have often blamed Al Zulfiqar for sabotage and a crime wave in the southern province of Sindh, of which Karachi is the capital. Ms. Bhutto, now opposition leader, dismissed the allegations as an attempt to malign her and a pretext to victimise members of her Pakistan People's Party.

Iran prosecutor denies death sentence against unveiled women

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's prosecutor-general Saturday denied that women detained for ignoring Islamic dress rules which mandate they cover their hair and body face the death penalty, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported. "Those who do not observe the Islamic dress codes in Iran are not executed and what the Western media have attributed to me are pure lies," Aabolfazl Musavi-Tabrizi told IRNA. In a phone-in programme on Tehran Radio Thursday, the prosecutor-general had said that ignoring the dress code would be considered apostasy, punishable by death under Iran's Islamic laws.

Captors silent despite U.N. efforts to end hostage saga

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Pro-Iranian kidnappers maintained their silence Saturday despite a week of United Nations-led efforts to arrange an exchange of Western hostages and missing Israeli soldiers for hundreds of Arab prisoners.

The kidnappers' last statement was an announcement of their release of American Edward Tracy last Sunday as Briton John McCarthy, freed three days earlier, handed over a letter from his captors to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Shiite Muslim fundamentalist sources said the Lebanese hostage-holders and Tehran were weighing their responses to the U.N. initiative and Israel's demand for word on the fate of its missing servicemen before any Arab prisoners could be freed.

In an unprecedented request for help, the Islamic Jihad letter asked Mr. Perez de Cuellar to arrange a swap of the hostages for the nearly 400 Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners from Lebanon by the Jewish state.

Israel sent emissaries to meet the U.N. chief in Geneva but said any deal must include its seven soldiers and airmen missing in Lebanon, or their remains if they had died. It ruled out making any goodwill gestures, including the release of some of Arab prisoners, before receiving evidence of their fate.

"Those holding the Israelis or their remains know Israel will pay for the information," a pro-Iranian political source said. "They are being very discreet. They want to see some kind of return before giving out the information."

The source said such information might be made available soon through diplomatic channels, or by a statement, photograph or videotape delivered to the

media. It all depends on the assurances the captors receive," the source said.

Israel, meanwhile, offered to allow the Red Cross visit its most senior Shiite prisoner on condition the Red Cross is also allowed to visit Israelis held in Lebanon.

Uri Lubrani, Israel's top hostage negotiator, earlier this week reiterated that Israel is ready to make "gestures" in exchange for information on the seven missing Israelis. He elaborated Saturday with the offer to allow the Red Cross visit Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid.

However, Mr. Lubrani told Israel Radio that until Israel got irrefutable information on its missing servicemen, nothing would move in the hostage talks.

Sheikh Obeid, 33, was kidnapped by Israeli agents from his home in South Lebanon in 1989. So far, Israeli authorities have prevented Red Cross delegations from visiting the Lebanese cleric, who is being held in a prison in northern Israel.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar was quoted as saying he believes a solution could be negotiated within two weeks despite new complications and demands.

Among the complications, Iran's ambassador to Germany suggested Friday that two German hostages may remain in captivity unless Bonn frees two Lebanese — one jailed on a conviction of killing a U.S. serviceman in a 1983 hijacking.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar has insisted that any exchange will not include prisoners held outside the Middle East, including the two brothers jailed in Germany, Mohammad and Abbas Hamadi.

The U.N. leader told a radio station in Lisbon he may have to interrupt a nine-day vacation in Portugal to continue the talks.

"I'm glad to hear it. It is

something which just proves that the move of the secretary-general is beginning to bear fruit," said Mr. Lubrani.

Imad Moughneyeh, a founder of Islamic Jihad who allegedly masterminded the kidnapping of Westerners, returned to Beirut from Iran just before McCarthy's release and helped write the letter to Mr. Perez de Cuellar, fundamentalist and security sources reported.

"Imad and his associates are now following up the various reactions to their move," one source said. "They will soon come up with something indicating how they think things are going."

At least nine Western hostages are believed held by Mr. Moughneyeh and his associates. They are five Americans, two Britons and two Germans. The longest-held, Americans Terry Anderson and Thomas Sutherland, were kidnapped in 1985.

Italian Alberto Molinari was reportedly killed soon after his abduction in September 1985.

Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual mentor of Lebanon's fundamentalist Shiites, said at Friday prayers in Beirut that he feared U.S. President George Bush might block the U.N. leader's mediation effort.

"We think according to the American statements that they do not want to exert pressure on Israel to release the captives it holds," Sheikh Fadlallah said.

"What attracts our attention... is that the U.S. president said he understands the Israeli stand in getting back its soldiers and therefore he understands its refusal to release the detainees," he added. "The ball is now in the American court."

Palestinians hold secret talks in London on peace parley

Receive instructions from PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat

LONDON (R) — Palestinians from Israeli-occupied territories have begun secret talks in London with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to discuss approaches to a Middle East peace conference, Palestinian sources said Saturday.

The sources named the Palestinian leaders as Faisal Al Hussein, Hanan Ashrawi and Zakaria Al Agha.

The same group, approved by the PLO Executive Committee, led the Palestinian side in recent talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

The sources said they met senior PLO officials and leading Palestinian intellectuals from the United States and Britain at an undisclosed location in London Friday night for the first of a series of meetings over the weekend.

Among prominent Palestinian intellectuals at the meeting were three academics, Edward Said, Ibrahim Abu Laghd and historian Walid Khalidi. Also involved is Nasser Kudwa, PLO delegate to the United Nations.

They had a working lunch Saturday with British Foreign Office officials, the sources added.

"The committee began a series of meetings...to discuss Palestinian recommendations on the guarantees required by the United States regarding a peace conference on the Middle East," one source said.

The delegates were joined by a senior PLO official, not identified, who brought PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's instructions from Tunis, the source added.

Israel has agreed to attend a superpower-sponsored Middle East conference, which Mr. Baker wants to open in October, if the issue of Palestinian representation is resolved first.

Israel refuses to talk to the PLO and wants to exclude Palestinians from Arab East Jerusalem. The source said the PLO sought guarantees regarding its role and Palestinian representation at a conference.

Mr. Arafat's instructions also included a call that the goal of the conference be "to ensure Israeli

withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with U.N. resolution 242," the source said, plus an assurance of an end to Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

The committee's recommendations will be presented to the PLO leadership in Tunis for endorsement.

Britain suspended contact with the PLO at ministerial level over the PLO's support for Iraq but recently became a diplomatic conduit between the Palestinians and Washington.

Aff Sfeih, PLO representative in London, said the choice of the British capital for the present talks was "moving and symbolic," since Britain ruled Palestine before the creation of Israel in 1948.

"In London decades ago, decisions detrimental to the Palestinian people were taken and now meeting that we see favouring the rebirth of Palestine are taking place in London," he said.

Turkey wants Iraqi Kurds to expel PKK

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz said Saturday he had told Iraqi Kurdish leaders to rid northern Iraq of rebel Turkish Kurds or face the consequences if the job were left to Turkey, Anatolian news agency said.

Mr. Yilmaz told reporters that Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, and Massoud Barzani, who heads the Kurdish Democratic Party, were told: "Either you clean up the PKK members, or, if we do it, then this will harm you as well."

Turkish troops crossed into northern Iraq on Aug. 5 to attack bases of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), whose seven-year secessionist campaign in southeastern Turkey has claimed more than 3,300 lives.

Mr. Talabani, who had earlier called Turkey's cross-border operation a violation of international law, said Friday Iraqi Kurdish guerrillas would prevent other groups from operating in northern Iraq once Turkish troops pulled out.

A government source said Iraqi Kurdish groups gave Turkey information to help it locate PKK

targets in northern Iraq. Mr. Yilmaz said the "PKK terror" was largely being carried out by local leaders and that it had grown away behind the control of the group's leader, Abdullah Ocalan.

In the latest attack by the PKK, rebels fired two rockets at a gendarme post in Malatya town in the southeast Friday night but nobody was hurt as the rockets missed the target.

Mr. Yilmaz also said Turkey's presence in the U.S.-led multinational force in southeastern Turkey allowed Ankara to carry out reconnaissance flights in Iraq's northern areas where Baghdad has no control.

Ogus Kaan Koksal, governor of the town of Malatya, said PKK rebels fired the rockets from a hilltop about 500 metres from the post. They fell on empty land nearby.

"They escaped in the darkness but security teams are continuing operations to find them," said Mr. Koksal.

On Thursday 14 rebels, a soldier and a policeman were killed in a gunbattle between security forces and PKK guerrillas near

another town in the southeast, Sirvan.

The night before three soldiers were killed by a band of about 90 guerrillas on a main road in southeastern Turkey.

In London, a Kurdish rebel leader claimed Friday Iraq was moving troops into Kurdish towns and sending helicopters to a base near the Turkish border.

Barham Saleh of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan also said large numbers of Iraqi troops and security forces were "ejecting" Kurds from around the oil centre of Kirkuk in what he called a "dramatic escalation of the Arabisation policy."

The Kurds want Kirkuk included in a deal now being negotiated with the Iraqi government to grant a measure of autonomy to the Kurdish north. The city has large Kurdish population but also includes Iraqi Arabs and Turkomans.

Mr. Saleh claimed 2,726 pieces of land had been seized and registered in the name of Arab settlers to replace Kurds in the city.

He said Iraqi troop movements had also been observed in the

cities of Erbil and Sulaimaniya. "Helicopters have been seen overflying and landing at a military base in Akra north of the 36th parallel close to the Turkish border not far from Duhuk," he said.

Mr. Saleh contended this breached the agreement under which allied forces pulled out of northern Iraq, where they had been protecting Kurdish refugees after a short-lived rebellion against Baghdad at the end of the Gulf war.

Iran and the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees have made plans to give shelter to Iraqi refugees during the winter, the Islamic Republic News Agency said Saturday.

The agency said Iran and the United Nations will construct prefabricated shelters, a water supply system and sanitary facilities for the refugees in mountainous northeastern Iran.

It said the first phase of the winter lodging plan would provide shelter for 40,000 refugees.

IRNA did not give any figures for the number of Iraqi refugees, mostly Kurds, who remained in northeastern Iran.

Iran to boost oil output capacity to 5 million bpd

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Iran, the second biggest crude exporter in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), said Saturday it was pressing ahead with plans to increase oil production capacity to five million barrels per day (bpd) from 3.5 million at present.

Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh said Iranian teams had embarked on an extensive drilling programme to increase output. Foreign drilling experts will also be invited to join them.

"We are working to increase our capacity. I hope by March 1993 we will reach the capacity of five million," Mr. Aqazadeh said during a visit to Kuwait, where a team of Iranian experts is helping to tap blazing oil wells.

"We need 270 new wells to reach that capacity."

Iran is currently producing about 3.5 million bpd and exported a daily average of 2.7 million barrels last month, he said. Exports had eased to around 2.6 million bpd this month.

"Saudi Arabia is by far the biggest exporter in the OPEC. Its July output was estimated at 8.1 million bpd."

Iran was capable of producing six million bpd before the revolution in 1979 but its production facilities were badly hit during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Earlier Saturday Mr. Aqazadeh delivered a message from Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to the emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

"The message was about bilateral relations, the Palestinians and OPEC," he said without giving details.

Tehran Radio said that Mr. Rafsanjani's message to the emir concerned "fulfilment of the

rights of the oppressed Palestinian nation and confronting the current trend to undermine their rights."

The radio said Mr. Aqazadeh arrived later in the Saudi Arabian capital, Riyadh, with a similar message.

Iran has condemned U.S. efforts to convene an Arab-Israeli peace conference, supported by most Arab states. Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said this month that Palestinians could gain nothing from a conference and should intensify their uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Mr. Aqazadeh, accompanied by Kuwaiti Oil Minister Hamoud Abdulla Al Raqba, drove to Ahmadi, south of Kuwait City, to see the Iranian firefighting team which capped its first well Friday.

But a meeting with the team was cancelled after clouds of black smoke and smog from burning wells engulfed the road to the Burgan oilfield, forcing the official motorcade to turn back.

Relations between Iran and the oil-rich Gulf states deteriorated sharply during the Iran-Iraq war, when Kuwait and Saudi Arabia gave financial backing to Iraq against Iran.

But Iran remained neutral during the recent Gulf war.

Kuwait began almost immediately to try to improve relations.

Iran has offered to sell oil on Kuwait's behalf until the emirate can get its own production going again.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the Iranian firefighters had extinguished and capped their first well, BG-180, Friday. The Iranian contract calls for capping 28 wells over the next year.

Shooting shows volatility on Iraq-Kuwait border

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — A shooting incident last week on the Kuwait-Iraq border highlights the simmering tension between the two countries despite U.N. efforts to pacify the area.

An Iraqi patrol reportedly opened fire Wednesday towards two Kuwait police cars that bogged down in the desert near the frontier.

The Kuwaitis were scouting for sites for new border posts. The Iraqis said they were doing so inside Iraqi territory.

Officials of the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, (UNIKOM), who patrol a 2,400-square-kilometre demilitarised zone straddling the border, intervened and have launched an investigation.

Major General Gunther Greindl, commander of U.N. border observers, said Saturday that the way the countries respond to the inquiry will be "a test case" of cooperation in the post-Gulf war era.

"I am getting very good cooperation so far," Gen. Greindl told the Associated Press. "We will see how things go with the pending incident on the shooting."

The firing, which drew a complaint from Kuwait to the U.N. Security Council in New York, comes amid reports of Iraqi scavenging in Kuwait for weapons and munitions abandoned at the end of the Gulf war.

Gen. Greindl admits there has been some cross-border raiding, mainly by nomadic Arabs and smugglers.

He describes it as small-scale and says "we have no indication this is an organised operation."

Still, he said, the U.N. is trying to retrieve 11 Silkworth missiles that Iraq took in May from a

naval base that it maintained south of the Iraqi town of Umm Qasr.

Iraq already has put back four other Silkworths it took from the same base in early June, Gen. Greindl said.

"It's a difficult call," he explained. "Before the war, Iraq established and maintained this base. But the border we act on — described in 1963 but never adopted — puts the base inside Kuwait, so the missiles should be returned."

Anything involving the naval base is a sensitive issue with Iraq, since it invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990, in part to secure the islands of Warbah and Bubiyan that control the approaches to the base.

Iraq also accused Kuwait of slant-drilling into oil fields on the Iraqi side of the border and of overproducing to lower world oil prices.

Gen. Greindl, 52, was commander of U.N. forces in Cyprus for eight years before taking command of UNIKOM in April.

He says that many of the problems that arise in the demilitarised zone here stem from a misunderstanding of his force's role and the still-unresolved dispute between Iraq and Kuwait over the exact location of the border.

UNIKOM has 300 unarmed troops from 33 nations. They are not peacekeepers but observers whose role is to monitor the zone and report any breaches of the ceasefire.

A five-man commission has been established by U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar to demarcate the boundary once and for all.

Crashed Indian plane had strayed off path

IMPHAL, India (AP) — The wreckage of an Indian Airlines plane that crashed in eastern India's lush tropical forest, killing 69 people, was found scattered 22 kilometres off its flight path, officials said Saturday.

Paramilitary forces who trudged uphill across thick, slushy undergrowth for seven hours in remote eastern India recovered 55 bodies from the scattered wreckage of the Boeing 737-200 jetliner that crashed Friday.

"There is no sign of survivors," said A.V. Liddle, the director general of police in Imphal, the capital of Manipur state on the Burmese border.

Civil Aviation Minister Madhav Rao Scindia said the 13-year-old plane, flying through a thick cloud, slammed nose-first into a mountain and splintered into pieces.

"The whole impact was taken by the nose and the tail is the only part which is more or less intact. Trees have been uprooted on the hillside and the wreckage is strewn over the slope," Mr. Scindia said after viewing the scene from an air force helicopter.

The airline said 63 passengers,

including an infant, and six crew members were aboard the 65-minute flight from Calcutta when the plane went down 35 kilometres from Imphal's runway.

The plane crashed in a remote corner of India in the lush green Tahang Hills at the foothills of the Himalayan mountains. The region is 1,700 kilometres east of New Delhi.

Mr. Scindia said the recovery team scouring the leach-infested jungle had found the black box containing the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder and were bringing it Imphal.

The tragedy came one day after a separatist group in the neighbouring state of Assam threatened to hijack another flight from Calcutta to Jorhat in Assam.

The threat was not carried out, but the anonymous telephone threats raised the possibility of sabotage on the Imphal-bound flight.

Mr. Scindia refused to rule out terrorism until an investigation is completed, but indicated he thought it unlikely.

"Obviously this has taken place

just before the landing. Normally sabotage is not timed so well," he told reporters at Imphal airport.

"At the time of landing there was heavy cloud. He (the pilot) obviously couldn't see anything," Mr. Scindia said. It was likely that the explosion reported by witnesses occurred when the plane hurtled into the mountain.

Mr. Liddle and airline officials said they had no explanation for the crash or why the plane strayed off course. An airport official said the hill was 22 kilometres off the flight path.

The government would not announce the cause of the crash until it completes a full inquiry, which usually takes several weeks, said Surjit Singh, the airline's deputy commercial director.

Air Marshal S.S. Ramdass, chairman of Indian Airlines, said rain and low clouds hung over the mountains around Imphal airport. "Visibility was almost zero," he said.

Visibility at the airport in the bowl-shaped valley was good, however.

Approaching Imphal, the plane had crossed a ridge and flown

over the airport at 3,000 metres on its normal flight path and was looping around to land when contact was lost, Marshal Ramdass said.

The last word from the flight came at 12:46 p.m. (0716 GMT) nine minutes before the plane's scheduled landing time.

S.V. Goswami, the top state bureaucrat of Manipur, said after flying over the crash site that the plane hit the peak of a 2,070-metre hill, scattering metal over a wide area about 420 to 570 metres down the slope.

"Everything is in small splinters. The plane has just disintegrated. All I could see was the tail and pieces of wreckage," he said.

It was the eighth crash for Indian Airlines since 1963, involving more than 30 deaths each. The two most recent crashes — in February 1990 and October 1988 — were blamed on human error.

The state-owned Indian Airlines is one of the largest air carriers outside the United States, flying to 62 destinations, including eight in neighbouring countries. It makes at least 240 flights a day.

French police accused of dragging feet in Bakhtiar case

PARIS (R) — French police were accused by the media Saturday of deliberately dragging their feet in the hunt for the killers of former Iranian Prime Minister Shapur Bakhtiar.

Citing delays and near-misses that have allowed three Iranian suspects to remain at large for the past 11 days, the press suggested police had been told to let them escape to avoid jeopardising international moves to free hostages.

Everyone knows that if the three assassins were ever arrested, Paris would suddenly find itself in a rather embarrassing position," said Le Figaro in an editorial.

The daily said a U.N.-mediated exchange of Arab prisoners for Western hostages in Beirut would immediately be blocked if three new Middle East guerrillas were shown in jail.

"We risk finding ourselves once again in the awkward position we knew in the Gordji and Naccache affairs," it added.

Lebanese gunman Anis Naccache and four accomplices were jailed in France after launching an unsuccessful attempt on Mr. Bakhtiar's life in 1980 in which two people died.

Mr. Naccache's release, granted under an amnesty last year, became one of the demands made by a Middle East group that terrorised Paris with a bloody campaign of bomb attacks in 1986.

An Iranian embassy official, Wahid Gordji, was later suspected of involvement in the bombings. France eventually allowed Mr. Gordji to leave but severed its ties with Iran.

The Figaro speculated that, afraid of a "second Naccache affair" and determined not to threaten improving relations with Tehran, the authorities may have put a brake on police inquiries. The interior ministry, coordinating police investigations, was not available for comment.

Police methods came under scrutiny as soon as Mr. Bakhtiar and his secretary were found stabbed to death in the former premier's closely-guarded Paris home 10 days ago.

The three suspects, the last people to visit Mr. Bakhtiar, were allowed in by French police guards posted at the house.

Despite evidence that the victims offered resistance, the four guards heard nothing. And the deaths were not noticed until 36 hours later, giving the Iranians time to make their get-away.

Le Quotidien questioned how Mr. Bakhtiar's guards, who it said were meant to telephone him every hour, could have allowed so much time to go by without word from the opposition leader.

"Everything has taken place as though formal orders were given to allow the attackers to act and then escape. If so, it would no longer be a police scandal, it

would be a political scandal," the newspaper said.

Le Parisien printed a page of 10 police "blunders" ranging from the delay in producing photographs of the wanted men to the episode when suspects Ali Vakili Rad and Mohammad Azadi were held by French police after being turned away from the Swiss border.

They were released because the murders had not yet been discovered.

One of the Iranians later managed to cross the border and was tracked to a hotel in Geneva. But a hitch with a police computer matching hotel registers with lists of wanted men allowed the suspect to escape, Swiss police said.

Referring to the police errors, French radio said a fourth man may have flown in with Mr. Rad and Mr. Azadi in July whose task was to disseminate misleading information to confuse the police.

"Not a day goes by without a new development, a near-miss, a blunder. Not an hour passes without some jinx. Everyone feels things have become too big, too unlikely," said Le Parisien.

Iran has denied a role in the murders but Iranian exiles living in France accuse Tehran of sending a squad of killers.

France and Iran are currently close to solving a nagging financial dispute and President Francois Mitterrand is due to visit Tehran in October to crown the rapprochement.

Iraqis under heavy psychological strain, says expert

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The international isolation of Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait, the devastating war which crippled basic services, skyrocketing prices and worsening living conditions have left deep scars in the psyche of the Iraqi society, according to an Indian psychologist.

"There is a lot of human suffering," said Usha Shankar Narayan, who spent three weeks in Iraq this month. "The mental and physical health of the Iraqi people is drastically affected as a result of the international embargo and the massive destruction caused by the allied blitzkrieg during the war."

Miss Narayan, 34, who travelled extensively throughout

Iraq on a personal mission to study the "Psychological impact of the war on the Iraqi people," said that she found that "physical and mental strain is mounting among the Iraqis as a result of the day-to-day problems posed by the continuing embargo."

"The physical strain is a result of the shortage of food and medicine (owing to the embargo), and women and children are suffering the worst," she said.

"I interviewed more than 100 people — most of them between 15 and 70 years — although it was difficult since I do not speak Arabic," added Miss Narayan, a senior corporate planning officer at one of India's largest refineries.

Asked whether the allied bombing during the war or the rebellions in the north and south

that followed the ceasefire in early March had a worse effect on the Iraqis, she said: "One cannot differentiate categorically. We are talking about the impact of war on the people regardless of whether it was a result of the bombing or the civil war."

"As for the mental health of the Iraqi people, I found that the stress on people is very high; first because of a prolonged war (the 1980-88 war with Iran), and then this new war and the economic embargo," she said.

The mental stress on the people, she added, has led to a rise in psychological disorders. "Problems such as neurosis, anxiety, depression, asthma and hysteria have shot up drastically," she said. "There is also a rise in crime rates, cases of alcoholism, re-

lapses of psychotic diseases, manic depression, heart attacks, traumas, and schizophrenia."

Miss Narayan attributed the relapses of psychotic diseases to stress and the lack of medications. She also noticed the rate of miscarriages and premature births has gone up.

"I could not get any figures since the hospitals are not keeping any proper records of patients because they are understaffed and overworked," Miss Narayan said.

"The human suffering is high and at least for humanitarian reasons the embargo on food and medicine should be lifted," Miss Narayan said. "Medicine and food should reach Iraq very quickly."

"People there are very frustrated and have lost hope for the future. There is a lot of confusion and fear of what will happen if this state of affairs continues," she added.

"One positive effect of the war is that the country is trying to open up a little," Miss Narayan said. "There is movement towards democracy and this should be encouraged."

Miss Narayan plans to present a scientific paper on her findings in Iraq. She will also report her conclusions to the Indian people through the press.

"On the whole the Iraqi people are demoralised and are suffering both mentally and physically, and if this situation continues it will have a lot of negative fallout in the future," Miss Narayan said.

Bush rejects releasing Israeli spy in hostage deal

KENNEBUNKPORT (R) — President George Bush said Friday he was not considering releasing the sentence of an American jailed for life as an Israeli spy and the prisoner's family said they had not authorised an appeal to Mr. Bush.

In an open letter to Mr. Bush this week, Alan Dershowitz, lawyer for Jonathan Pollard and Mr. Pollard's rabbi, Avraham Weiss, asked for commutation of Mr. Pollard's sentence to time served as a "reciprocal gesture" to Israel.

"Israel is being asked to 'give something' to alleviate the suffering of American hostages (in Lebanon)," they wrote. "America should also 'give something' to alleviate the suffering of an American Jew who has by now more than paid his debt."

But Mr. Bush told a reporter at his Kennebunkport, Maine, Holiday home: "There's no such consideration. You're mixing apples and oranges. A U.S. court found him guilty. No-one is considering him a hostage."

Mr. Pollard's sister, Carol Pollard, said in a statement to Reuters that the Pollard family had not authorised or encouraged any contacts with Mr. Bush, including the letter from Mr. Dershowitz and Rabbi Weiss.

She added that the letter did not represent the views of Jonathan Pollard and hoped the legal arguments in his pending appeal would give him the justice

he had been denied.

At stake in the package deal being negotiated through United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar are seven Israelis missing in Lebanon since its 1982 invasion, about 10 Western hostages and nearly 400 Arab prisoners held by Israel or its client militia in South Lebanon.

Asked whether Israel had sought Mr. Pollard's release in conjunction with Middle East prisoner exchange negotiations, Mr. Bush said: "No, they have not asked."

Mr. Pollard, now 37, pleaded guilty in 1987 to charges of passing secrets to Israel while working as a U.S. navy intelligence analyst. His then-wife sentenced to five years in prison as an accessory.

Mr. Pollard's lawyers are seeking to rescind his guilty plea and obtain a new trial, if the sentence is not commuted, on the ground the government reneged on its plea agreement.

In an open letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir released by Mr. Weiss Thursday, Mr. Pollard's parents wrote, from their home in South Bend, Indiana: "We ask that you do not sit idly by."

But Israeli defence ministry spokesman Banny Naveh said Friday when asked about the Pollard case: "In the present negotiations, we care only about the seven soldiers."

Interpol joins search for Polish-Israeli businessman

WARSAW (R) — Interpol has joined the search for Boguslaw Bagisik, a Polish-Israeli businessman who fled from Poland to Israel amid the country's biggest banking scandal, the Rzezcopolska daily said Saturday.

The newspaper said investigations into the case were being carried out around the world, from Interpol's offices in Lyon, France, to Washington, Wiesbaden, Germany and Israel.

It quoted sources at the International Police Organisation as saying Mr. Bagisik had family ties in Wiesbaden. They also said new information on the case had surfaced in the United States.

Mr. Bagisik, a rags-to-riches businessman believed to have transferred \$85 million to Israel, is at the centre of the scandal in which seven people, including the vice-president of the National Bank of Poland, have been arrested so far.

It involved corruption and the illicit issue of guaranteed credits and cheques to the detriment of the state treasury.

In a recent interview Mr. Bagisik said he had exploited flaws in

the Polish banking system to earn up to 290 per cent annual interest on deposits, but denied any wrongdoing.

The newspaper quoted prosecutor's spokeswoman Grazyna Taladaj as saying the charges against Mr. Bagisik carried a minimum three-year jail term and "evading arrest" would be regarded as an aggravation circumstance. Further arrests could not be ruled out, she added.

Starting with only \$20 in 1989, Mr. Bagisik turned his Art-B company into an international enterprise with assets estimated in press reports at \$150 million or higher.

The firm set up about 200 holding companies in Poland, tried to buy half of Israel's biggest petroleum concern and was negotiating the construction of a car-assembly plant in Poland with the Chrysler Corporation of the United States.

Mr. Bagisik, whose age is given in press reports as 28, flew to Israel shortly before the scandal erupted and then relinquished ownership of Art-B, turning it over to a private Polish bank.

McCarthy says greatest hope is to see fellow hostages free

LYNHAM, England (AP) — Former hostage John McCarthy flew to a secret hideaway Saturday saying his greatest hope is to be reunited with his fellow hostages in freedom.

"I hope (it) will be soon," the 34-year-old T.V. producer said in a sometimes emotional farewell before leaving an air base at Lynham, where he has spent eight days recovering from more than five years of captivity.

Smiling and saying he felt great, Mr. McCarthy thanked doctors, psychologists and staff at this base 130 kilometres west of London for helping to ease him towards a normal life.

He paid tribute to fellow Briton Terry Waite and Americans Terry Anderson and Tom Sutherland who shared his captivity for the past year and are still held by the Islamic Jihad group.

It is only because "of those dear men" that he is now "cheerful and very relaxed," Mr. McCarthy said.

Mr. Anderson had the strength expected from a former marine and veteran war correspondent, he said.

"But above all else, he has enormous personal warmth, a great sensitivity to the moods and needs of other people, and a fierce loyalty to his friends. That was simply a vital support and inspiration to me. He is a very fine man and a great friend," Mr. McCarthy said.

Mr. Anderson, 43, the chief Middle East correspondent of the Associated Press, was kidnapped in March 1985 and is the longest-held Western hostage in Lebanon.

Tom Sutherland, 60, acting dean of agriculture at the American University of Beirut who was kidnapped three months after Mr. Anderson, "is another great man," Mr. McCarthy said.

"His gentleness, patience and his love of life saw me through many dark hours. His reflections on his early life and his thoughts for the future were always presented with great humour and wisdom and inspired me with an enormous sense of security in those difficult times," he said.

Mr. Waite, 52, the archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy who was kidnapped in January 1987 on a mission seeking freedom for hostages, "is a man with great strength of spirit and purpose, a man of great courage," Mr. McCarthy said.

"You know this from the work he did before he was kidnapped and he has maintained those same strengths and qualities throughout all the long years," he said.

Mr. McCarthy's voice cracked as he spoke of Brian Keenan, the Irish teacher who shared a cell with him for 4½ years before he was freed last year.

Rafsanjani wants hostages freed

BEIRUT (AP) — The weekly magazine Al Shiraa said Saturday that Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani wanted the Western hostages in Lebanon released to patch up relations with the West, while Iranian hardliners thought a confrontation was inevitable.

It said Mr. Rafsanjani was convinced that Iran's support for hostage-taking in Lebanon undermined its ability to win the 1980-88 war against Iraq.

The magazine, which closely follows Iranian affairs, said Mr. Rafsanjani was trying to close the hostage file to be able to concentrate on building a modern state based on technology available only from the West.

Mr. Rafsanjani, the magazine said, "found out that the main reason behind Iran's defeat in the war was the superiority of weapons given to Iraq and banned for Iran."

"Since Rafsanjani took office (in 1989) he has been seeking to rid Iran of the burden of the hostages," the article said.

Al Shiraa gained international fame when it broke the story of secret U.S. arms sales to Iran in return for releasing Western hostages before 1987.

The article said Mr. Rafsanjani wants to rebuild "the Iranian society, the Iranian economy, the services and factories, he wants to modernise agriculture. Most of the means to achieve his goals are in the West and the West has no mercy, especially now that it is enjoying the peak of its victories over Iraq."

"Iran also tried to seek technology in Western Europe and Japan, but America chased it from these nations which were obliged to treat Iran in line with America's policy," the magazine said.

Mr. Rafsanjani had to take the tough decision of patching up relations with the West, but first must eliminate the hostage hurdle, it said.

Iraqi papers assail curbs on oil sales

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Baghdad's newspapers Saturday attacked the conditions of a U.N.-approved oil sale, saying it was blatant interference in Iraq's internal affairs.

Al Jomhuriya, which like other papers splashed the broadside across its front page, said Washington lead the efforts in the U.N. Security Council to restrict the sale due to its hatred of the Iraqi people.

The decision is designed to starve the Iraqi people into dependence on the West, the paper said.

"The more they try to harm Iraq, the more Iraqis will believe in choosing national resistance," the paper said.

It said the restrictions were aimed at keeping Iraq from claiming its deserved leading role in regional and international affairs but the Iraqis would outlast them.

"They will find in Iraq a patience which has never been seen by anyone before," the paper said.

The U.N. Security Council Thursday allowed Baghdad to pay for relief supplies with \$1.6 billion in oil. The oil would be the first Iraqi export permitted since the council imposed the broad sanctions after the invasion of Kuwait last August.

Iraq will have no control over the revenue, which will be handled by the United Nations.

Al Qadisiya attacked the U.N. plan for setting aside money to pay for compensation and for the cost of destroying Iraq's weapons.

The remaining sum "is not enough even to cover the minimum needs of the Iraqi people for food, medicine and medical supplies," the paper said.

The paper said the sale was not designed to alleviate Iraq's suffering but to deepen the siege.

The paper also attacked another resolution voted Thursday that condemned Iraq for not disclosing all of its nuclear and other weapons development as demanded under the ceasefire agreement.

Al Qadisiya, the army daily,

said the resolution was designed to lay the groundwork for another military attack against Iraq.

The newspaper Iraq said the U.N. vote meant denying the Iraqi people their simplest rights.

The daily Babil said it was lamentable that the Communist states had voted with the capitalist nations to starve the Iraqi people.

It said the shoe the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev used to pound the door during a famous speech was again needed at the U.N. to make members up to the fact they are ignoring all international laws.

The government itself, which before Thursday's U.N. vote rejected conditions contained in the resolution, withheld formal reaction.

"Iraq can do nothing because they need some money for importing food and medicine," one diplomat said. "They will have to agree within a few weeks."

The head of the U.N. post-Gulf war relief effort, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, supported an easing of sanctions in a report which said a country rich in oil such as Iraq should not have to rely on international charity.

His team and relief groups have reported early-warning signs of famine among the poorest of Iraq's 18 million people.

But Iraq balked at conditions attached to the oil-sale formula initially devised by France to ensure that money from oil was in fact spent on food and medicines.

Five members of the Iraqi leadership — President Saddam Hussein's deputy Izzat Ibrahim, Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan, Prime Minister Saddam Hammadi, Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh and National Assembly Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh — rejected plans for the U.N. to hold money from the oil sales in a special account and for U.N. control of food distribution.

They denounced the French formula as an infringement of Iraq's sovereignty and colonial domination under the guise of a humanitarian gesture.

Al Qadisiya, the army daily,

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

16:40 Montagne
16:50 Le Chevalier de Ciel
19:10 News in French
19:15 Stratageme
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:40 News in Arabic
20:50 Yes Minister
21:10 Documentary
22:00 News in English
22:30 Hunter

PRAYER TIMES

04:33 Fajr
05:56 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:39 Dhuhr
16:18 Asr
19:22 Maghrib
20:46 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifich Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 652785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terresant Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625541

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932

Church of the Nazarene tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Normal summer weather will prevail and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Amman 17 / 29

Aqaba 25 / 36

Deserts 18 / 34

Jordan Valley 24 / 37

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 29, Aqaba 36. Humidity readings:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman 60 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ayman Abdul Jabbar 614222
Dr. Fikri Abu Tayeh 889080
Dr. Mohammad Al Awad 741391
Dr. Arif Al Ashab 602507
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asana pharmacy 637055
Naimah pharmacy 636732
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisai pharmacy 637660

IBSD:
Dr. Mohammad Al Zabi (—)
Abdell Telephone Repair 561101
Al Shara'a pharmacy 278825

ZARQA:
Dr. Musa Odeh (—)
Khalilkh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Police Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdell Telephone Repair 561101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816/32
Akheidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816/32
Jabal Amman Maternity 642862
Malha, J. Amn. 636140
Palestine, Shmeisai 6647114
Shmeisai Hospital 771013
Shmeisai Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musaber Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdell 666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdell 6641646
Italian, Al-Musaber 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/6
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)883323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)96732
Al Hikmah Modern Hospital (09)90990

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (02)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Vienna (RJ)
18:30 Aqaba (RJ)
18:45 Jeddah (RJ)
18:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:45 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
22:30 Jeddah (RJ)
22:45 Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

17:40 Madrid (RJ)
18:30 Cairo (RJ)
18:45 New York (RJ)
18:45 Istanbul (RJ)
19:00 Rome (RJ)
19:10 Paris, Geneva (RJ)
19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
20:30 London, Brussels (RJ)
20:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:40 Tripoli (LN)
14:00 Bahrain (GF)
18:30 Larnaca (CY)
20:30 Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30 Beirut (RJ)
08:15 Aqaba (RJ)
12:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
14:00 Cairo (RJ)
18:30 Larnaca (RJ)
19:00 Riyadh (RJ)
21:30 Dubai (RJ)
21:30 Damascus (RJ)
21:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:45 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
22:30 Jeddah (RJ)
22:45 Bangkok (RJ)



Her Majesty Queen Noor visits the village of Al Mukheibeh to learn about socio-economic conditions in the area.

Queen continues series of inspection visits to needy areas of Kingdom

By Tamara Shukri
Petra

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday paid a field trip to the village of Al Mukheibeh, 35 kilometres north of Irbid in the Jordan Valley, to inspect the local community.

She listened to a briefing by the Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah about the region's problems and current efforts to promote socio-economic development.

Minister of Education Eid Dahiyat, who accompanied the Queen, spoke of his ministry's plans for improving the local schools.

The Queen visited the health centre and was briefed on its services.

The Queen's visit is one in a series which she is making to needy areas of the Kingdom in an effort to direct studies of their needs and accelerate development projects.

A socio-economic study by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) has revealed that Al Mukheibeh's 3,600 inhabitants suffer from poverty, lower educational standards, unemployment, shortages of water, electricity, and transportation services and poor health facilities.

The NHF subsequently included the village in its Quality of Life Project currently being implemented in four needy villages in Jordan.

The NHF is helping villagers organise themselves to establish

their local councils and development funds and to initiate women's participation in community affairs and income-generating schemes.

The Queen, who met with members of the Village Development Council and the Mothers Club, donated money to the local charitable society and gave educational games and children's books to the village's kindergarten.

The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) is also active in the village. It helped construct the premises of the local charitable society and provided furniture and other items for the kindergarten. GUVS has also rehabilitated 18 needy families, offering them goats to rear and make a living.

Health Ministry to open 51 laboratories in 1991-92

AMMAN (Petra) — In its drive to continue expansion into primary health care services in the Kingdom, the Health Ministry plans to open 51 laboratories in 1991 and 1992, Health Minister Mamdouh Al Abbadi announced Saturday.

At present, laboratory services are available at 63 health centres in the Kingdom but more are needed to provide services to the remaining regions, said Dr. Abbadi at the opening of a training seminar for 20 laboratory technicians employed by the health centres.

The training seminar, which is expected to last for two months, has been organised in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The participants are expected to attend lectures and conduct practical work in the first course of its kind organised by the Health Ministry, according to the Health Ministry officials.

They said that the ministry has plans for a series of training seminars for all technicians working for the ministry's health centres in the country.

The Ministry of Health will be opening 10 to 15 laboratories each year until all health centres have such essential services, said Dr. Abbadi in his address at the opening session.

The minister said that health authorities in Jordan will maintain close cooperation with WHO in providing training to Jordanian laboratory technicians in order to



Mamdouh Al Abbadi

achieve stated goals.

The Health Ministry, Dr. Abbadi said, is keen on promoting national efforts to ensure continued education in medical services with the purpose of upgrading the efficiency and the skill of the health workers in providing curative and preventive medical services to the public.

Laboratory training is of paramount importance for the ministry, which aims to achieve early discovery and diagnosis of various diseases at health centres, a practice which can help the nation control the spread of disease at its earliest stage, Dr. Abbadi said.

Health Department directors in Jordan attended the opening meeting.

Jordan nears agreement on debt restructuring with Paris Club members

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan is putting the final touches on bilateral agreements with three governments represented in the Paris Club of creditors on rescheduling the Kingdom's debt repayments due in 1989 and 1990 prior to seeking debt relief and launching fresh negotiations on dues in commercial debts for 1991 and 1992.

A delegation led by Finance Minister Basel Jaradneh was in Paris over the weekend before leaving for Washington for talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

According to reports in the European press, unconfirmed by Jordanian officials, the Jaradneh mission came after the government cleared a major hurdle in the way of concluding separate debt rescheduling agreements with Belgium, Sweden and Britain by accepting the creditors' definition of loans given to the Kingdom and pave the way for the finalisation of an accord reached between Jordan and the Paris Club in 1989.

Under the 1989 agreement, the Paris Club accepted a rescheduling of the Kingdom's dues of \$656 million for fiscal year 1989 and \$622 million for 1990. But the finalisation of the deal has been delayed over differing interpretations of the nature of Belgian, Swedish and British loans.

While the creditors said the

loans were government-guaranteed commercial loans, Jordan said its understanding was that they were concessionary loans. The issue was contested until earlier this month when the Jordanian government agreed to accept the creditors' interpretation, informed sources said.

Jordan needs to finalise the accord with the Paris Club by concluding bilateral agreements with its members before it can secure an IMF green light for negotiations on fresh debt rescheduling accords not only with the Kingdom's government creditors, but also with the London Club, which represents banks and other commercial institutions.

Jordan, saddled with \$8.3 billion in foreign debts (not including military debts), had already rescheduled dues to the London Club members until June 30, 1991. With the conclusion of agreements with Belgium, Britain and Sweden, it hopes to be able to present a debt write-off request to the Paris Club and reschedule dues to the London Club for the second half of 1991 to the second half of 1993.

However, the Kingdom has to come current with interest and principal repayments agreed under the accords for 1990 and 1991. The Kingdom, which suspended debt servicing at the height of the Gulf crisis last year, will need \$750 million to settle all arrears.

"The IMF board of directors are sure to respond positively to the Jordanian approach," said a highly-informed international source. "Jordan had satisfied most of the conditions stipulated by the IMF in earlier agreements and was on the way to fulfilling others when the Gulf crisis struck," said the source, who preferred anonymity.

"It was a situation beyond Jordan's control," he said, "and this is very well understood by the IMF decision-makers, particularly after the last IMF delegation to visit Jordan (in May) furnished a positive report on the Kingdom's economic moorings."

Jordanian officials have said that the Kingdom is willing to work closely with the IMF and the World Bank and to continue with its economic restructuring programme agreed in 1989.

The restructuring programmes has undergone several periodical updates, particularly in view of the adverse economic impact of the Gulf crisis on the Jordanian economy.

Further updates and final shapes to austerity measures are expected to be given during Mr. Jaradneh's talks with high-level IMF officials in Washington this week.

It was not immediately known whether Mr. Jaradneh will meet with Bush administration officials during his visit for talks on restored American assistance to Jordan.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Thousands attend Abu Nowar funeral

AMMAN (J.T.) — The funeral of the late Ali Abu Nowar who died of cancer in London took place in Salt Saturday. His Majesty King Hussein was represented at the funeral by Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, who joined thousands of mourners paying their respects to the late Abu Nowar, a Senate member and a former army commander. Prime Minister Taher Masri, His Majesty King Hussein's political advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, cabinet members, Senators, Parliament members and army officers were among those attending the funeral. The late Mr. Abu Nowar, 68, had passed away at a London hospital last Thursday.

Jordan, Iraq seek greater bilateral ties

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Iraqi Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan received Saturday Jordan Cooperative Organisation Director General Jamal Bedour and the delegation accompanying him. Mr. Ramadan and Mr. Bedour discussed scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Iraq. The Iraqi vice-president called for enhancing bilateral cooperation and for investing all capabilities in improving the cooperative movement in both countries, particularly in agricultural fields.

Masri, Arabiyat discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Taher Masri Saturday met Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat and discussed a number of parliamentary matters and cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities. The meeting was attended by Minister of Information and Culture Khaled Karaki.

Libya pays its CAEU dues

AMMAN (Petra) — The general secretariat of the Council of the Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) received Monday \$190,000 from Libya as part of its contribution to the CAEU annual budget. The secretary-general of the council expressed his thanks for and appreciation to Libya for fulfilling its commitments towards the CAEU.

6 AIDS cases discovered last year

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 41 cases of tuberculosis and six cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) were discovered last year during medical checkups involving 64,873 people arriving in Jordan for a short stay of one month or more, according to a report in Ad-Dustour Arabic daily. The paper said that the Chest Diseases Unit at the Health Ministry, which carried out these check-ups, has transferred JD 518,984 to the Health Insurance Fund. The amount is collected through fees payable for carrying out medical checkups. The Chest Diseases Unit usually carried out medical checkups for people arriving in Jordan for a visit or to work to make sure that they are free from communicable and contagious diseases, particularly tuberculosis, AIDS, and Bilharzia.

Farmers problems to be discussed

AMMAN (Petra) — The minister of Water and Irrigation and the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah will visit the Jordan Valley region Sunday to discuss issues with local farmers. They will also visit the tomato paste processing plant at Deir Alla and other areas stretching to Karamah, not far from the Dead Sea. During the tour, the two officials will hold a meeting with farmers to discuss matters related to the coming agricultural season.

Centre to become a community college

SALT (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Awni Al Bashir announced Saturday that the Princess Rahmah Social Development Centre in Allan near Salt will be transformed into a complete community college offering training courses in social development fields. The minister made the announcement upon opening several training courses organised by the centre.



Salim Al Zubi

Municipal councils praised as models of democracy

IRBID (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Salim Al Zubi discussed in a meeting Saturday with Irbid Mayor Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat issues related to Irbid municipality works and plans.

Mr. Zubi, who was on a tour of the Irbid Governorate, visited Irbid's new municipal building and inspected its various sections. The four-storey building includes administrative offices, a public library, a lecture hall, an exhibition hall and a commercial market comprising 34 stores as well as a two-storey parking lot that could accommodate 100 cars.

The minister then opened Al Yarmouk Park north of the city of Irbid. The park, which was financed by the Irbid municipality and extends over an area of 44 dunums, includes a children's library and sports fields. The park was opened as part of the municipality's ongoing celebrations of the anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne.

Mr. Zubi also opened the new building of Douqara's municipality in Irbid Governorate. He met with Douqara's municipal council members and citizens to be familiarised with their demands and needs.

In the meeting, the minister said the municipal council is a local government and is a real representation of democracy.

He pointed out that the ministry will call for amending the municipal election law to make the chairman of the municipal council directly elected by citizens.

The ministry, he said, will expand the authority of the municipal councils to make the members of that council responsible for administering and developing the local society.

The minister called for bringing to an end to urban expansion over agricultural land.

Mr. Zubi was accompanied on the visit by the director of the Cities and Villages Development Bank and several officials.



SUMMER CAMP: A total of 53 children who took part in a summer camp programme organised by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) graduated at a ceremony attended by NHF Director General Inam Al Mufti and relatives of the participants. Participants in the ten-day camp programme included training of children in music by three specialists. Mrs. Mufti watched the children performing and playing pieces of music and she later distributed diplomas to the participants.



Farmers and agricultural cooperatives to find process easier to get loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) has set up a special committee to deal with the question of the credit facilities offered to local farmers and agricultural cooperatives to carry out various agriculture-related projects, ACC Director General Mansour Ben Tarif said Friday.

Mr. Ben Tarif said in a statement that the ACC has been entrusted with all matters related to loans to farmers under a government decision issued in 1988. The government has realised the complications of having several loan-giving institutions and decided in April to pool the work of these institutions through the ACC, he said.

Farmers used to get loans from the Jordan Cooperative Bank and the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO), but this practice has now stopped.

Mr. Ben Tarif also said that the ACC is now taking over the work of the other institutions and taking delivery from the bank the sum of JD 17 million, which will be used to give loans to the various cooperatives.

The ACC has set up a special

Bishops pledge to help expatriates in response to King Hussein's request

AMMAN (J.T.) — Heads of Christian communities in Jordan Saturday responded to a call by His Majesty King Hussein to the Jordanian people to help the returning expatriates and pledged to back national efforts in this concern.

The bishops of the Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic, the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian and Protestant churches in the country said that they would urge worshippers to help their brothers and sisters who have recently returned from the Gulf.

"Your Majesty's warnings to the world community against the flagrant violations of human rights in our region and the violations of all principles and human principles and values, has prompted us to meet and to voice our deep feelings of gratitude for and support for Your Majesty and to

back your call to help the returnees from Kuwait and Iraq," said the heads of the religious denominations in a cable to the King.

The bishops said that they would urge the Christian community to display the spirit of love and brotherhood and would contribute to be enhancement of national unity and to propagate and deepen the meaning of faith and charity.

"We pledge to place all our potentials under your directives in order to achieve your noble objectives," the bishops said in the cable.

In another development, mobilisation and emergency committee set up by the Professional Association Complex in Amman has appealed to all workers and professionals in the Kingdom to

offer to be host for the returnees and offer help.

Mr. Mousa Abu Hamid, the committee chairman, said that the committee would be ready to receive any calls from members of the public wishing to host any of the returning families or to offer financial assistance to them. The committee is in contact with concerned government departments to set up a special camp where committee members would offer the returnees relief supplies, Dr. Abu Hamid said.

He said that a meeting would be held in Amman Sunday to discuss the best and most effective means which can contribute to the alleviation of the returnees' sufferings. He added that his committee has branches all over the country ready to receive donations from the public.

Belgium-based doctors association to study health situation in Iraq

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A delegation of the Belgium-based Doctors of the Third World left Amman for Baghdad Saturday on a fact finding mission to pave the way for a visit by a larger team from Harvard University to discuss humanitarian issues in the wake of the Gulf war.

The delegation, which groups doctors from Belgium, Morocco and Canada, will conduct a study on the health situation in Iraqi cities.

The health situation in Iraq is cause for concern to humanity and doctors, according to the head of the group. She said that the doctors of the Third World who are now undertaking this mission had previously participated in a preparatory conference for the "trial of U.S. warmongers in the Gulf."

The group members condemned Western attempts to halt Iraq's scientific advances and said that while Iraq is being prevented from promoting its scientific programme, Israel is allowed to go ahead with plans that are considered favourable to the West.

Dr. Jilali from Morocco said that the United States is responsible for the present poor

health situation in Iraq. The mortality rate in Iraq is now the highest in the world because of the embargo on food and medicine, he said.

A group of 32 doctors, engineers and lawyers from around the world will shortly visit Iraq to conduct a full survey of the consequences of the war. The group will be accompanied by a team representing natural conservationists to study the environment, Dr. Jilali said.

In another development, a team representing the Federation of Arab Doctors who returned from a meeting in Damascus appealed to the world community to lift the economic embargo on Iraq imposed by the United Nations.

Hassan Khreis, the federation's secretary general who led the team, said that food and health situations are deteriorating fast due to the embargo, which should be lifted for humanitarian reasons.

Dr. Khreis said that the Damascus meeting was devoted to humanitarian issues related to the effects of the embargo on the people of Iraq, whose lives are being endangered due to the severe shortages of food and medicine.

Dr. Khreis told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the federation has issued a statement calling for an end to the embargo on Iraq.

On Palestine, he said, the federation issued an appeal to world organisations and nations in general to help put an end to Israel's inhuman practices and crimes against the Palestinian people and to help improve the health conditions of the Arab population under Israeli rule.

The federation's statement, Dr. Khreis added, called for the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which provides for the protection of the civilian population under occupation in Palestine and the Golan Heights.

The continued influx of Jews in Palestine, the building of settlements on Arab territory and the stealing of Arab water are dangers confronting the whole Arab Nation that call for a collective stand to confront the enemy's plans and conspiracies, Dr. Khreis said. He added that the three day meeting in Damascus discussed matters related to the federation's activities and the general Arab doctors meeting due in Tunis in October.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

☆ Exhibition of traditional embroideries and hand-made items at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

الصحف الأردنية المستقلة المنشورة بالإنجليزية من قبل المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. تأسست 1975.

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Story where it belongs

AFTER HIS Majesty King Hussein has sounded the alarm about the continuing Kuwaiti violations of the human rights of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates, it is incumbent on the government to seek effective means to translate this urgent concern into practical measures and policies. On the humanitarian level, the Jordanian move to alert the international community on the systematic violations of human rights in the emirate requires reflection in the various United Nations fora seized with human rights and humanitarian issues. With this year's U.N. General Assembly session due to begin in New York in September, there is no better way and time to raise the issue than to have an item on it added to the agenda of the various General Assembly committees, especially the Third Committee which is generally seized with human rights issues and social and cultural concerns. It so happens also that the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities is currently convening in Geneva. This U.N. human rights organ is particularly suited to examine the alarming situation in Kuwait with a view to addressing it in depth.

On the economic level, the same thing applies. There are several international fora for presenting the sad situation in the emirate with a view to addressing its economic, social and cultural dimensions. To begin with, the Second General Assembly Committee's mandate covers the economic implications of human rights and humanitarian problems worldwide. What better place to raise the economic costs of such persistent and gross human rights violations than in the Second General Assembly Committee. Then there is the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations which is "the" U.N. organ delegated to examine such concerns as those highlighted by Amman recently.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is also well poised to extend help to Jordan in this vein. Having recently highlighted human rights issues and humanitarian concerns as primary guidelines for its development programmes across the world, UNDP has now an opportunity to translate this new policy into action. It is therefore encouraging that the resident representative of UNDP has been approached for this very purpose. Of course the list of international agencies that may extend assistance to Jordan is not exhaustive. Many institutions have complementary spheres of work and each and every one of them can lend aid to the Kingdom in accordance with its own mandate and scope of interest. The High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) for example has the capacity to aid countries that become suddenly recipients of floods of refugees. The exodus of more than a quarter of a million of Jordanians and Palestinians into the Kingdom is of such a magnitude and scale that warrants an early intervention by the HCR. Jordanian diplomatic representatives should be called upon to take this matter with the HCR as a matter of high urgency.

As Jordan is bearing the brunt of the human drama unfolding in the Gulf, it is only natural that it take the initiative in submitting it to the attention and perusal of the international community at the right time and place. This is obviously the right time and the international fora constitute the right place. Jordan might not get what it needs from such a move but it remains a necessary step to set the stage for mobilising an international effort that may eventually lead effective and meaningful aid first to the actual victims and secondly to the country that has wholeheartedly accepted them till there is a final settlement of their grievances.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDAN opens its arms wide for the returning expatriates who were forced to leave Kuwait after spending a lifetime building that country, said Al Rai daily Saturday. The paper said that it is natural for the Kingdom, which has only meagre resources and which still suffers from the consequences of the Gulf crisis, to be in need of help from other nations so as to cope with the additional burdens. The civilised world should shoulder its responsibility in this matter and should extend a helping hand to the country which is trying to grapple with a humanitarian problem, the paper said. International aid to Jordan remains the best translation of any humanitarian feelings, and such aid is urgently needed now, before tomorrow, the paper added. It said that Jordan was forced to remind the international community of its principles and of the need to offer help to the destitute evicted from a country which they had spent their whole life in building. Jordan, for its part, will never give in to any form of pressure or temptations to change its national stand and the cohesion among the members of the Jordanian family can never be subject to any question with regard to offering the returnees the urgent help they need, the paper noted.

Sawt Al Shaab daily dwelt on the coming peace conference and stressed the need for the Arab states that are in direct confrontation with Israel to coordinate their efforts and their stands before the convening of the proposed conference. His Majesty King Hussein's coming visit to Syria in the course of Jordan's intensive efforts to bring about such Arab-Arab cooperation is seen as a manifestation of Jordan's desire to allow the October peace conference to achieve success, the paper noted. Political events are moving fast in the region, as King Hussein had said in his Friday's interview with the Visions television agency the paper noted. It said that it is unreasonable to see the Arab side failing to reach a consensus on a joint stand to be taken at the coming conference which holds the destiny of the region and the future of the coming generations, the paper noted. It is really sad to see the U.S. secretary of state conducting talks with Arab leaders over the past several months while, the Arab leaders themselves fail to convene a meeting to discuss issues of common concern to their nation, the paper said. It is time for the Arabs to stop dealing with politics in the old traditional mentality which has proved to be obsolete and counterproductive, the paper noted.

EC aims to use aid to promote human rights in the Third World

By Denis Baresch

Reuter

BRUSSELS — When the European Community (EC) stepped in last year to bankroll the fledgling democracies of Eastern Europe, it made political change a condition for help.

Now it plans to use its huge aid budget — billions of dollars of credits and grants each year, most of which is spent buying European goods and services — to promote democracy and respect for human rights in developing countries.

"After the failure of communism the EC filled a void. Now it can no longer stand aloof," said a spokesman for the European Commission, the community's executive body.

"The problem of human rights is becoming the crux of North-South relations," he said. Changes in Eastern Europe have brought what was a taboo subject out of the closet and provided the community with an opportunity to flex new-found political muscle.

Human rights have moved to centre stage in its dialogue with countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere.

The 12 EC leaders said in a final statement after their summit in Luxembourg in June "that respecting, promoting and safeguarding human rights... is one of the cornerstones of European cooperation."

To put that declaration into practice the commission has asked member states for oper-

ational guidelines.

EC Development Commissioner Manuel Marin has suggested a carrot-and-stick approach, with the emphasis firmly on the carrot in the form of cash to help states stamp out corruption, draft constitutions and take other steps to establish democracy.

But the commission also wants formal grounds for doing what it has been doing informally for some time — cutting off development aid to countries where human rights abuse is rife.

Trade sanctions like those against South Africa are usually the province of EC foreign ministers, but it is the commission which oversees development aid on a day-to-day basis.

In the past year it has blocked funding for projects in Somalia, Sudan and Liberia without waiting for a political decision from EC ministers.

"Where there were glaring violations, or where there was no longer an authority we could work with, we quietly suspended our aid," the commission spokesman said.

Conditional aid is nothing new in itself — the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have long attached political and economic strings to their lending.

But some developing countries are less than enthusiastic at the prospect of the community setting itself up as a moral tutor to the Third World.

"The EC should not be given a role that it cannot play," said Ghebray Berhane, secretary-

general of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of 69 developing countries.

Some African diplomats fear the community could pick on poor countries where aid is most badly needed while turning a blind eye to scant regard for democracy in wealthier, more influential parts of the world.

Nor is Western-style multi-party democracy necessarily the best recipe for popular representation in countries carved out by European colonialists last century, where tribal loyalties still come before political allegiance, they argue.

Others note that while the EC's help for the ACP is substantial — 12 billion European Currency Units (\$14 billion) promised up until 1995 — it is small beside the sums given bilaterally by individual member states.

Commission sources admit it would be high on impossible to lay down hard and fast rules for assessing human rights abuses and applying sanctions.

But building the principle into EC cooperation would send a clear signal to repressive and authoritarian governments around the world, they say.

Mr. Berhane said help was welcome as long as the community let ACP countries reform their political systems at the pace and in the manner that they considered fit.

"The ACP countries must clean up their act themselves. Then the EC can help to consolidate by supporting their efforts."

Bangladesh faces tough test over killing of founding father

By Anis Ahmed

Reuter

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh, ready to embark on parliamentary democracy after a long period of military rule, faces a new explosive issue — how to deal with the assassins of the nation's founding father 16 years ago.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is under intense pressure from the opposition Awami League to scrap a law passed by her late husband giving immunity to those responsible for the murder of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975.

The Awami League is headed by Mujibur Rahman's eldest surviving daughter, Sheikh Hasina, who has backed Mrs. Khaleda's plans to return Bangladesh to a parliamentary system and demanded that in return her father's killers be brought to justice.

Bangladesh will hold a referendum among its 60 million voters on September 15 on the government's amendment to the constitution that will end 16 years of presidential rule and military dictatorship.

Mrs. Zia took office after free elections in February that followed the overthrow of President Hossain Mohammad Ershad last December in a popular campaign that his opponents said ended a "black chapter" in the country's 20-year history.

The 330-member parliament unanimously approved a constitutional amendment on Aug. 6 to restore a parliamentary form of government.

Sheikh Hasina extended crucial support to Mrs. Zia, whose party has 164 members in parliament and is 56 seats short of the two-thirds majority needed for such amendments.

Sheikh Hasina later said she expected Mrs. Zia to return the favour and support passage of a bill, submitted last Thursday by her Awami League, or scrapping the immunity granted to Mr. Mujib's killers.

Mr. Mujib led Bangladesh to independence from Pakistan in 1971 and served as president and prime minister until Aug. 15, 1975, when a band of young army officers killed him and most members of his family in a mid-night coup.

Mrs. Zia's husband, Ziaur Rahman, who eventually rose to power through the coup only to be killed in an abortive mutiny in 1981, passed a law in 1979 granting immunity to Mr. Mujib's killers and allowed them to leave the country.

Two of the officers, retired colonels Farook Reehman and Abdur Rashid, returned from self-exile after Mr. Ershad seized power in a 1982 bloodless coup. They formed the Freedom Party and took part in elections.

The two men are still in Dhaka but have made no public comment on the issue.

Political analysts said Mr. Mujib's followers were trying to revive the issue of his death to make political capital.

"They are trying to revive the issue and make gains out of it, taking advantage of the changed

political situation," one analyst commented.

Supporting Sheikh Hasina's demands, hundreds of students demonstrated outside the Broadcasting Authority office in Dhaka on Monday, demanding that radio and television broadcast special programmes on Mr. Mujib on Thursday, the 16th anniversary of his assassination.

Otherwise, they warned, Mrs. Zia's government would face grave consequences. The threats cannot be ignored, particularly after clashes between followers of the two women leaders forced indefinite closure of four major universities and dozens of colleges in the past three months.

Mrs. Zia faces an array of critical problems and politicians privately express fears of another military takeover in the event of her government falling.

Though in jail, where he is serving a 10-year jail sentence for keeping illegal weapons, Mr. Ershad still looms large.

His Jatiya Party, which won 35 seats in the February poll is trying to muster support for the ex-ruler to be allowed to leave the country, Jatiya sources said.

The country is meanwhile sinking into crime — banditry, robberies, sexual violence and murder — and many officials feel police are not doing enough.

Smaller political groups have demanded that if Mr. Mujib's killers go on trial, so should those responsible for numerous political deaths during his rule and that of Ziaur Rahman.

Dr. Fanek, get well

FOR THE first time since he started contributing his economy column to the Jordan Times nine years ago, Fahed Fanek is conspicuously absent from the page this week. Not by choice or design, for he is presently recovering from a sudden illness that hopefully will not keep him away from his readers for too long. Please join us in wishing Dr. Fanek a speedy recovery, and happy return to this corner soon.

LETTERS

Objective...

To the Editor:

AS ONE of P.V. Vivekanand's regular readers, I thought highly of his piece "Squatters hindering efforts to reopen Jordanian embassy in Beirut" (J.T. 11 August 1991). The problems — and possibilities — of Lebanon are enormous, and fair, professional reporting such as Mr. Vivekanand's helps everybody. Lebanese or otherwise, to come to grips with a difficult situation, I, however, am not Lebanese, as described in the otherwise accurate article. Although I have great respect and affection for Lebanon and its people, I am in fact Jordanian and holder of no other nationality.

Riad Al Khouri
Amman

... or biased reporting?

Dear Sir,

Your reports on the murder of UNESCO director (Jordan Times, Aug. 12-13) were terrible. The report is more on the murderer's side. It seems as if you are trying to tell your readers that the murderer had good reason to have killed his boss. Even the condolences sent by UNESCO employees didn't use "killed" or "murdered." Instead the word was "passed away." The portrayal of the murderer's children used in your newspaper was an attempt to gain sympathy for him. It seems there is a part of agreement between you and them. I am sorry to read these kind of biased reports in the Jordan Times where once Rami Khouri, Marwan Muasher and many others used to contribute articles of high quality.

Ibrahim
Irbid

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

U.S. no longer believes old Yugoslavia can be salvaged

By Alan Elsner

Reuter

WASHINGTON — The United States seems to have concluded that Yugoslavia in its old form is dead, but Washington is still groping for a coherent policy towards the divided Balkan country in the face of worsening ethnic violence.

"The consensus is that the old Yugoslavia is dead," said a Bush administration official.

"But it's still far from clear what will emerge to take its place. In the meantime, we are staying in the background and letting the European Community take the lead on dealing with this issue."

Until the republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared independence in late June, the United States vigorously championed the need for Yugoslavia's territorial integrity to be preserved.

Secretary of State James Baker visited Yugoslavia on June 11 in an unsuccessful last-minute bid to persuade the republics' leaders not to launch their secession bids.

Mr. Baker said it was "extraordinarily important that the principle of ... unity and preservation of the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia be respected."

That policy shifted in July after the first outbreaks of fighting. The United States then said it

would support any arrangement that Yugoslavs worked out, including Slovenian and Croatian independence, as long as it was reached peacefully.

That remains official U.S. policy. But ideas about the kind of solution that the United States would regard as both attainable and desirable are continuing to evolve along with the crisis itself.

"The key problem is that Yugoslavia is like Humpty Dumpty. You can't put it together again but the consequences of it falling apart completely are truly staggering. That's why everybody is waiting," said Robert Haydon, a Yugoslavia expert with the University of Pittsburgh.

The administration official argued that it was less important at present to articulate a vision of a possible future Yugoslavia than to stabilise the situation so that some form of dialogue between the warring groups could develop.

"The key at this point is to try to prevent worsening bloodshed and chaos that could affect the whole region," the official said.

But he acknowledged that the United States did not have a clear picture of the future.

"Even if we did have one, and we don't, we probably wouldn't talk about it because it's just not

our business to push solutions of this problem on others," the official said.

Walter Roberts, a former U.S. diplomat in Belgrade, now with George Washington University, said the United States and Europe continued to hope that Yugoslavia would eventually see that one way or another they had to live together.

"I can't be put back together exactly as it was. But some form of Yugoslav federation is still the best outcome for all concerned," he said.

The administration's thinking appears to have moved beyond that point. Officials now openly discuss the viability of various republics as separate states.

They believe the Republic of Slovenia, as the most Western-minded and ethnically homogeneous in Yugoslavia's volatile ethnic brew, might have the best chance of going it alone.

But the only way Croatia might be able to achieve independence could involve giving up the section of its territory where there is a Serbian majority.

Whatever the future, the official said the republics would need to retain economic links. "If they are cut off from each other economically, they face a bleak future," he said.

Sri Lanka's civil war continues — with weapons and words

By Daiton De Silva

Reuter

COLOMBO — As the Sri Lankan government sees it, the island's Tamil rebels have suffered a double blow to their fight for an independent homeland — one on the battlefield and the other on the propaganda front.

A drawn-out battle for an army camp at Elephant Pass in northern Sri Lanka which ended earlier this month was, according to the government, a disaster for the rebels, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The government says its armed forces killed as many as 2,200 rebels, losing only 160 of their own men.

The Tigers' own figures are drastically different. "About 250 Tigers were killed in the Elephant Pass fighting," said Anton Rajah, the Tigers' London representative. "We have no exact figure on those wounded but it is probably a similar number."

"More than 1,000 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and a similar number were injured," he said.

No independent estimates of the casualty toll are available, but Western diplomatic sources said they were not convinced by the government figures.

Nevertheless, President Ranasinghe Premadasa was sufficiently encouraged by the results of the battle to call on the rebels to abandon their "futile" fight.

The government says the Tigers have seen their prestige plummet since they were named

the major suspects in the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on May 21.

The Tigers had built up a network of supporters and sympathisers among the 55 million Indian Tamils in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu who have close religious and cultural links with their Sri Lankan cousins.

The Tigers feared that Mr. Gandhi, who had opposed the rebel demand for a separate state in Sri Lanka, might be returned to power in the Indian elections.

The Tigers have denied any involvement in the assassination, but Mr. Gandhi's death could cost them some of the sympathy they enjoyed in India and some Western countries.

Early this month Britain turned down a request by a Tiger leader, Sathasvan "Kittu" Krishnakumar, for political asylum and asked him to leave the country. "I hope that the other Western countries will follow suit," a military officer in Colombo told reporters.

The military officer said the Tamils used their overseas offices — in London and Paris, with representatives in Germany, Canada and the United States — to export money from Tamils and other people living in those countries in order to buy arms.

The Tigers are led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, 47, who is said to have fashioned the rebel group after Cuban leader Fidel Castro's guerrillas.

He came to national attention

when he was alleged to have murdered the mayor of a city in Jaffna, northern Sri Lanka, in 1975.

Military sources say Mr. Prabhakaran has not been leading his fighters from the front in recent battles but that he directs operations from hideouts in Jaffna or in the northern jungle.

Military estimates put the Tigers' strength at up to 8,000. Some of their senior fighters are said to have been trained in India, Libya and Lebanon.

One undeniable fact about the eight-year conflict is that it has been a financial drain for the government.

An opposition parliamentary and peace campaigner, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, said the cost of the Elephant Pass battle alone was enormous and one the government could ill afford.

"If the government has to deploy this number of soldiers each time a camp is under attack, then resources will be drained in no time," he said.

Mr. Nanayakkara said a political solution was the only way out of the crisis. "There should be an immediate ceasefire and a resumption of talks without conditions."

Lawrence Thilakar, the Tigers' representative in Paris, said the rebels were prepared to talk peace with the government, but without any preconditions.

"If they (the government) insist on preconditions, then we will make self-determination our own precondition," he said.

For war-torn Angola a long haul to fulfil economic potential

By Paul Ames

The Associated Press

LUANDA — The world's best is for sale in Roque Santeiro, the vast, colourful black market that symbolises the devastation wrought on the Angolan economy by 16 years of Marxist mismanagement and civil war.

"This is the market economy's answer to the centralised system," Vittorio L. Guandalini, a European Community advisor, said of the profusion of Japanese electronic equipment, French cognac, Dutch butter and other goods.

Roque Santeiro deals not only in contraband, but in goods obtained directly from state-owned factories or "people's stores" and resold at inflated prices.

The Angolan kwanza was artificially pegged at 33 to the dollar from 1975 until a devaluation in March, but a dollar bought up to 3,000 on the black market. The rate now is 66 to the dollar officially, and about 800 on the black market.

A health worker's monthly salary of 10,000 kwanzas will feed a family for only four days. Workers usually get paid part of their salary in goods. Most prefer this because goods can be resold on the black market.

With three cases of soft drinks, a worker can sell on the black market and earn three times his salary," said a Western business-

man based in Luanda. President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos pledged recently to introduce a market economy.

It will be difficult. Prices will rise when subsidies are removed, many public employees will lose their jobs and the currency will be worth even less, creating more hardship for people already in dire poverty.

Help could come from foreign investment as Angola opens its economy. Western officials are optimistic about the country's chances for an economic revival. "Angola is one of the few African countries with a genuine development capacity," a World Bank economist said, on condition of anonymity.

More than 90 per cent of foreign earnings come from oil, and petroleum exports probably will remain the economic mainstay. Angola is the sixth-ranking foreign supplier to the United States.

Prospecting for new oil reserves along the coast is expected to increase.

Angola is fifth in world diamond production, and exports earned \$240 million in 1990. The war's end makes increased production and exploration possible in the diamond country of the remote northeast.

The De Beers diamond cartel has begun a \$50 million prospecting programme and has expressed willingness to invest \$1 billion more in extraction.

There also are plans to reacti-

vate the plantations that once made Angola no. 4 in world coffee production.

Its food needs can be met by reviving farming on the fertile central plateau, restocking cattle herds on the southern plains and developing fishing along the coast.

During the war, oil exports kept the economy afloat but most of the money was spent in arms or food imports since Angola's previously rich agriculture was devastated by the war. Farming was hampered by mines and fighting in the countryside. The distribution network broke down.

From 1973 to 1989 wheat production fell from 33,000 to 2,400 tonnes, rice from 53,000 to 2,800 tonnes, maize from 854,000 to 204,000. Coffee, the main export crop before the war, fell from 210,000 tonnes in the early 1970s to about 5,000 in 1990, largely due to guerrilla action.

Dos Santos has admitted that the war was not the only cause of Angola's economic ills. He said the centrally controlled Marxist system had failed to meet the demands of the economy.

He further acknowledged mismanagement by heads of state-run factories and state farms. The system had the faults of Marxist economies elsewhere, with artificially maintained prices, a fixed exchange rate for a currency that lost most of its worth, restrictions on foreign investment, and widespread corruption.

U.S. media and the Gulf: Fair stuff or fairy tales?

By Osama Hussein

THE U.S. media considers itself nearly unique in the world for its openness, freedom from censorship and role as neutral observer. At no time has this myth been so evidently false as during the Gulf crisis.

The U.S. media obscured issues, ignored crucial facts, distorted history and, in some cases, outright lied.

While the American military was killing thousands of Iraqis, the American media focused on a handful of Iraqi fatalities. The few times Iraqi casualties were aired, they were dismissed as a "propaganda weapon." President Saddam Hussein could use to "score points." At times, Iraqi dead were forgotten altogether as when Ted Koppel, a major U.S. TV personality said: "Aside from the Scud missile that landed in Tel Aviv earlier, it has been a quiet night in the Middle East." This at a time when the U.S. military was attacking Iraq with one bomb-

ing mission every minute.

Mainstream U.S. media effectively blocked out voices against an American attack during the crisis. "Nightline," Mr. Koppel's nightly news programme, for example, did not have a single guest to articulate an anti-intervention policy during the first crucial month of the crisis. On the even of the war, a majority of Americans favoured a Mideast peace conference, including the question of Palestine, rather than war as a means of defusing the crisis, but virtually no-one advocating such a position was allowed on American TV screens. During the first two weeks of the war, a study by the media monitoring group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) found that peace voices accounted for 1.5 per cent of the total network coverage, about the same as coverage given to people whose travel plans had changed as a result of the war.

The media moulded history to fit its preferred options. Virtually the only historical pa-

ralled to be found was the Saddam/Hitler analogy. Discussion of other invasions such as the U.S. invasion of Panama or the Israeli invasion(s) of Lebanon and Palestine were usually off limits. The few times such analogies were drawn, they were instantly dismissed, if necessary, by rewriting history.

Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) were constantly portrayed as "backing President Saddam's invasion." The idea that someone could take a principled stand against the invasion of Kuwait and against a U.S. attack was off the permissible political spectrum. The only "dissidents" allowed were those who argued that war would not further American interests, either because war might drag on, or because it would destabilise pro-American regimes.

All this resulted in a remarkable ignorance on the part of the American public. A university study found that while nearly all Americans ques-

tioned knew what a Patriot missile was, less than a third knew that Israel also occupied other people's lands in the Mideast. Even fewer knew that the U.S. responded to Iraq's pre-crisis threat to use force against Kuwait by saying it would take no action. The study actually found that the more TV Americans watched, the less they knew about the underlying issues and the more likely they were to support the war.

The only exceptions to the pro-war chorus were small, independent U.S. journals like the Nation and the Progressive. They, unlike their corporate-owned counterparts, included principled dissenting voices and appropriate background. More importantly, they had an attitude sceptical of government, an attitude that is supposed to be endemic to a free press.

These small journals also took the Pentagon to court over the official press restrictions; in contrast the major

media took no legal action and by and large did not even cover the court case, which had been suspended. It would be wrong, however, to overemphasise the role of official censorship during the war. The media did the bidding of the state because of a tendency to serve power, for personal gain, and because of pressures of ownership and advertisers — the official censorship played a minor role.

These observations should be of interest not only for the light they shed on how the U.S. media work, but also as a warning to others. Self-censorship can be far more effective than official censorship. Only when a country striving for democracy has a spectrum of opinion, all freely aired, can it be said to be truly democratic.

Osama Hussein is an associate at FAIR, a New York-based media monitoring group. He is currently visiting Jordan.

IT'S TIME FOR THE 11:00 NEWS...

GOOD EVENING! IN THE NEWS TONIGHT—100,000 DEMONSTRATORS GATHERED IN THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO TODAY TO PROTEST AGAINST THE WAR IN THE GULF...



100,000 PEOPLE? GOSH, GIFF--THAT'S COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH THE CURRENT MEDIA PERCEPTION OF A NATION STRONGLY UNITED BEHIND THE PRESIDENT!

100,000 PEOPLE? GOSH, GIFF--THAT'S COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH THE CURRENT MEDIA PERCEPTION OF A NATION STRONGLY UNITED BEHIND THE PRESIDENT!



THAT'S TRUE, BETTY! THAT'S WHY WE'LL DOWNPLAY THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVENT BY RUNNING ONLY A FEW BRIEF SECONDS OF FOOTAGE FROM THE DEMONSTRATION...

THAT'S TRUE, BETTY! THAT'S WHY WE'LL DOWNPLAY THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVENT BY RUNNING ONLY A FEW BRIEF SECONDS OF FOOTAGE FROM THE DEMONSTRATION...



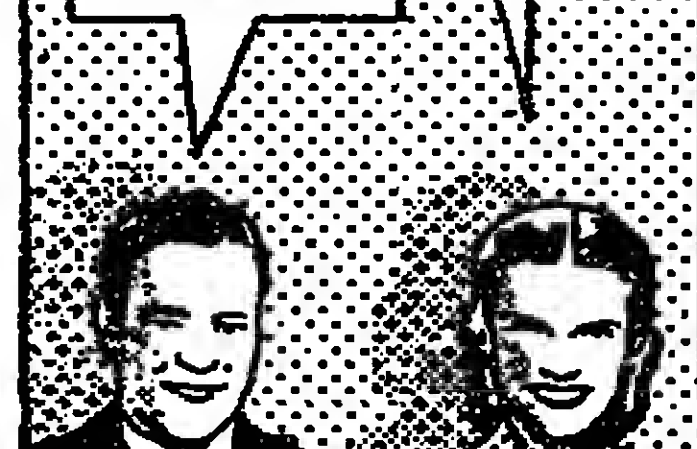
FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY COVERAGE OF FIFTEEN PRO-WAR DEMONSTRATORS IN WALNUT CREEK—SUBTLY INDICATING THAT THE TWO EVENTS ARE OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE!



FINALLY WE'LL CONCLUDE THE SEGMENT WITH THE LATEST NETWORK NEWS POLL SHOWING THAT A SOLID 97% OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BELIEVE THE ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS ARE TRAITOROUS DOGS FOR WHOM HANGING IS TOO GOOD!



COMING UP NEXT: REALLY COOL FOOTAGE OF JET FIGHTERS AND EXPLOSIONS.



Empty blocks tell grim tale of Palestinian exodus

By Nassir Shirkhani

Reuters

KUWAIT — The rows of empty apartment blocks in the Kuwaiti neighbourhood of Hawalli are a constant reminder to the emirate's Palestinian residents that many of their compatriots have left, never to return.

Those who remain suffer from an increasing sense of insecurity and an urge to join the exodus. "Look, that building is empty, this one has two lights burning and the one next to it three," said Nader, pointing at neglected and dust-covered blocks one evening. "I will also go soon and so will they," he said, gesturing towards his friends who nodded in agreement.

Palestinians bidding farewell to the land where they were born and bred say the decision to leave is painful but inevitable.

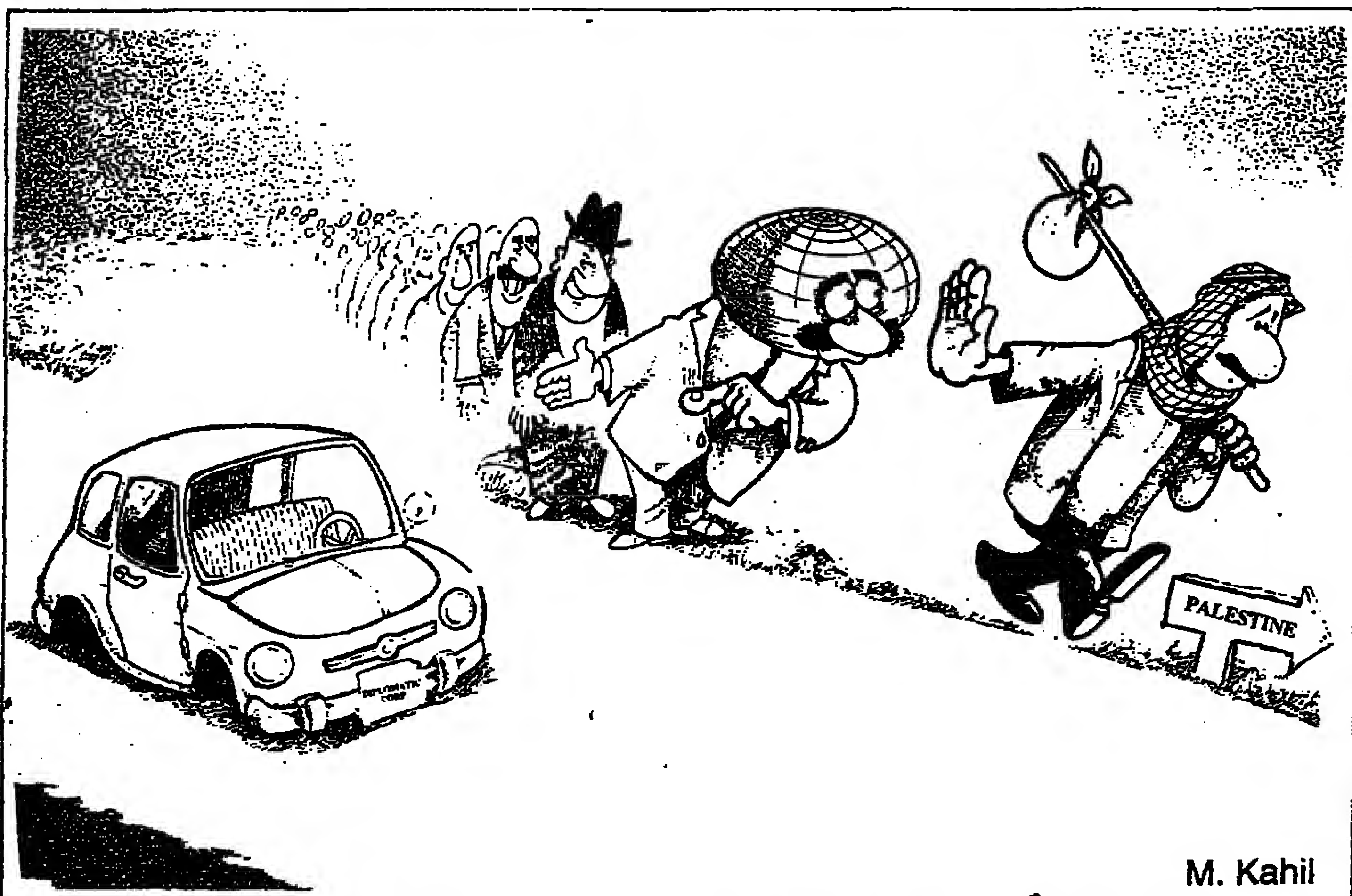
"You see I was born here. This is my motherland. I'm sad to leave but have no choice. (There are) no jobs, no schools, no money," said Fede Hassan, 20, before boarding a plane for Jordan with six members of her family.

The Palestinians, the technocrats of the emirate, have been leaving in ever increasing numbers since its liberation from Iraqi occupation when many were accused by Kuwaitis of supporting President Saddam Hussein.

"We have no money to pay the rent any more. I never thought of leaving Kuwait. Our people are now afraid and I'm seriously thinking of going," said Ali Isa, sending his 75-year-old mother to join the rest of her family in Jordan.

The Palestinian community was the largest expatriate group in Kuwait before last year's Iraqi invasion, numbering 350,000. It has now shrunk to less than 90,000 and the drain continues.

Palestinians formed the core of the Kuwaiti civil service, working as doctors, engineers and mazzing key posts at vital industries such as oil, water and electricity.



M. Kahil

Although most were either born or worked for decades in the emirate, they are not entitled to Kuwaiti passports.

At Kuwait airport, emotional scenes take place each day as more Palestinians pack the departure hall. Children, wives and the elderly, forced to leave behind loved ones, cry uncontrollably. Some men are delaying their departure, pending redundancy payments while a small number pin their hopes on planned labour laws that might allow them to stay.

The pace of the exodus has picked up this month as parents clamour to register their children in Jordanian schools.

Kuwait has laid off more than 110,000 civil servants, many of

them Palestinians, and barred their children from government schools and universities.

The emirate says it is trying to reduce its reliance on foreign labour as part of a "Kuwaitisation" programme.

Palestinians say the policy is aimed at uprooting them from the emirate and cite the recruitment of other Arabs and Asians to replace them.

Travel agencies have arranged for 32 charter flights which will take 5,500 Palestinians to Amman by the end of August.

In addition, there are two daily flights to the Jordanian capital via Cairo. Others take the arduous land route to Jordan.

Hawalli was the throbbing heart of Kuwait before Iraq's

invasion. Teeming neighbourhoods made it the emirate's most densely populated residential district.

Piles of rubbish now clog its streets where children played and youths gathered in the evenings. Run-down buildings and dirt-covered windows give it an eerie atmosphere.

Expensive cars rotting in the summer sun tell the tale of Palestinian owners unable to return.

Entire blocks are empty except for the odd light announcing the arrival of a new breed of neighbours — Indians or Arabs from countries which supported Kuwait against Iraq.

Kuwaitis, embittered by the

Palestine Liberation Organisation's support for Iraq during the Gulf war, are by and large, glad to see the Palestinians leave.

The war fostered a deep sense of suspicion and animosity between the Kuwaitis and Palestinians, targets of revenge killing after the liberation of Kuwait on February 28.

Large numbers were deported or jailed for their alleged support of Iraq. Palestinians say they are being unjustly victimised and harbour deep resentment towards the Kuwaitis.

"Palestinian mothers whose sons were killed, hope (President) Saddam will return so Palestinians can exact their revenge," said an embittered youth in Hawalli.

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Ordinary Issue No.: 15

Drawing of: August 17, 1991

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. 27462 Wins JD 25,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each wins JD 100
Holder of ticket No. 47326 Wins JD 6,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 400 each wins JD 40
Holder of ticket No. 41754 Wins JD 3,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 300 each wins JD 30
Holder of ticket No. 42045 Wins JD 2,500	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 200 each wins JD 20
Holder of ticket No. 73130 Wins JD 1,500	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 150 each wins JD 15
Holder of ticket No. 74527 Wins JD 1,200	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 100 each wins JD 10
Holder of ticket No. 25958 Wins JD 1,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 80 each wins JD 8
Holder of ticket No. 09743 Wins JD 600	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 70 each wins JD 7

27463 27472 27562 28462 37462 27461 27452 27362 26462 17462
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74528 74537 74627 75527 84527 74526 74517 74427 73527 64527
25959 25968 25058 26958 35958 25957 25948 25858 24958 15958
09744 09753 09843 00743 19743 09742 09733 09643 08743 79743

Ticket numbers 25721 16464 05996 59497	win JD 200 each
Ticket numbers 52330 32307 35695	win JD 100 each

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8531 4711 7440 Win JD 20 each	5084 8412 0151 Win JD 10 each
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942 231 059 058 684	Win JD 5 each
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 Enal Al Shamsi Amman - Merchant Half first JD 12,500	 Hassan Shamsi Zarqa - Engineer Half first JD 12,500	 Bassem Subayyeh Amman - Buyer Full second JD 6,000	 Sami Anyoub Amman - Architect Half first JD 1,500	 Mohammad Zaidat Amman - Teacher Half first JD 1,500	 Fadi Tumaayeh Amman Half first JD 1,250	 Hassan Al Shadi Amman - Employee Full first JD 1,500
Next Drawing takes place on September 2, 1991 First eight biggest prizes are issued from GUVS headquarters						

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Seles, Sabatini advance to Slims of Los Angeles semifinals

MANHATTAN BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Gabriela Sabatini, a streaky and uneven match, but McNeil seeded No. 8, wasted two match points as she fell apart in the third set.

McNeil's first match point came at 5-1 in the third set on Sabatini's serve, but McNeil hit a backhand volley wide. Sabatini showed with a forehand winner and held serve when McNeil hit a backhand into the net.

McNeil had another chance to win at 5-4 but double-faulted on match point and lost the game on two unforced errors. Two games later, Sabatini won the match at

love as McNeil double-faulted twice.

McNeil had eight double-faults in the match, six in the final set. "I didn't do anything special," Sabatini said. "She didn't want the match. I probably didn't win the match. I thought I was going to lose it."

McNeil agreed that she let the match slip away.

"If I had been a lot more aggressive, I would have won," she said. "I gave her the opportunity to get to the net when she was down. At 5-4, I kind of rushed things a bit."

Sabatini advanced to meet Japan's Kimiko Date in Saturday's semifinals.

In other quarterfinal matches, third-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario regrouped after dropping the first set and beat Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia 4-6,

6-4, 6-0. Date advanced by beating Jo Durie of Great Britain 6-4, 6-1.

Top-seeded Monica Seles played almost flawless tennis in beating Argentina's Mercedes Paz 6-2, 6-2.

Seles, the world's top-ranked woman player, lost only three points on her serve in the first set and won 13 of the last 16 points.

In the second, she took a 5-1 lead while losing only three of 23 points. Paz fought off a match point in the seventh game and held serve, only to have Seles serve out the match.

"I was feeling better about going to the net tonight," Seles said. "I'm working on that. My net game is a lot better than a month ago."

Paz said Seles was too much for her.

"I started to play well but I was

too anxious to win," she said. "She got into her rhythm. With Monica, you don't get any opportunities."

Sanchez Vicario, who will face Seles in the semifinals, overcame stomach problems to defeat Sukova.

After losing the first set, Sanchez Vicario began to take charge, using passing shots down the line to move the slower Sukova around the court.

At the changeover following the third game, the Spaniard left the court and vomited.

"She (Sukova) was playing well in that first set and not missing many shots," she said. "I started playing more aggressive. I knew it would be a tough match. I waited to pass her and I also started serve-and-volleying more. If I won the second set I knew I'd win the match."

Courier, Sampras advance on hardcourt

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Call them the young Americans — Jim Courier, Pete Sampras and David Wheaton. Leaders of the country's resurgence in the world tennis rankings and ready to knock heads in the U.S. Men's Hardcourts Championship.

Americans outnumbered German Boris Becker 3-1 in today's revenge-ringed semifinals of the \$1 million tournament.

Becker beat Wheaton 6-5, 7-6, 7-5 in the Wimbledon semis before losing the title to upstart countryman Michael Stich.

"I was real upset about losing that match," said Wheaton, who advanced to a rematch with Becker after a 6-1, 6-4 quarterfinal victory Friday over French teenager Fabrice Santoro.

Becker held off ninth-seeded Jakob Hlasek 6-4, 7-5. No. 5 Sampras beat unseeded Richard Fromberg of Australia 7-6 (7-1), 6-3 and Courier defeated No. 8 Andrei Cherkasov 6-2, 7-5.

Sampras and Courier were also paired for the second straight week in a semifinal. Sampras, the U.S. Open Champion, defeated Courier, the French Open winner, at the ATP Championships in Mason, Ohio.

At 23, Becker is older and more experienced than his American counterparts. The world's top-ranked player has won twice in three years and is seeded No. 1 here.

Sampras, who turned 20 Monday, is out to change that trend. "It would be nice if an American

won," he said. "I think American tennis is as strong as it ever will be."

Becker agreed, singling out the trio as the game's future greats.

"Those players are there for good," he said. "I believe I'll play them many, many more times and in big finals."

Wheaton is 0-3 lifetime against Becker, but they've never played on hardcourts.

"I expect him to serve-and-volley," Becker said. "I'll mix it up more than Wimbledon. I expect short points."

Playing in just his second tournament of the summer, the 22-year-old Wheaton said he's shaping himself for the U.S. Open, beginning on Aug. 26.

Seles barred from Barcelona Olympics

LONDON (AP) — Monica Seles, the world's top-ranked women's tennis player, will be barred from next summer's Olympics because she played in an exhibition tournament this summer in New Jersey.

The International Tennis Federation (ITF) Friday declared Seles ineligible for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics after determining she lacked a valid excuse for skipping this year's Federation Cup.

A player must make herself available for her national team at the Federation Cup to qualify for the Olympics, and Seles withdrew from the Yugoslav team two days before the start of the Federation Cup.

Seles said she skipped the July 22-28 event to avoid re-aggravating shin splints and presented the ITF with medical documents to support her case.

But the ITF said Friday it had rejected her excuse because she continued to play in the New Jersey exhibition July 20 and 21, even after withdrawing from the Federation Cup because of injury.

"The committee of management of the ITF concluded that Ms. Seles' decision to compete in an exhibition event, while at the same time withdrawing from the Federation Cup on medical grounds, was not justified by the medical documents supplied by her representatives," an ITF statement said.

Seles, playing in a tournament in Manhattan Beach, said she accepts the ITF's decision.

"If that's the way they decide, it's OK," she said after learning of the decision.

Puerto Rico stuns U.S. in baseball

HAVANA (AP) — If Puerto Rico wants to become a U.S. state, the surprising American sports machine would dearly love to have the island abroad.

Puerto Rico dealt its northern neighbor a second shattering blow to its pride with a 7-1 baseball victory Friday that was every bit as surprising and convincing as the men's basketball upset 24 hours earlier.

The Puerto Ricans will play Cuba for the gold medal Saturday night. The unbeaten Cubans downed the Dominican Republic 14-5. The U.S. team will play the Dominican for third place.

The U.S. team's undoing on the field began when pitching ace Jeff Mauer's spike got caught on the rubber and he served up a fastidiously down the middle that Edwin Garcia walloped for a grand slam in the third.

After a 2-2 tie in the first two innings, the U.S. team's lead was 2-0 in the third. The U.S. team's lead was 2-0 in the third.

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A clear chance missed by Al Hussein attackers against Al Qadisiya Photo by Abdullah Ayoub

Premier League roundup

By Ahmed Ismail

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two goals by Talal Rababa'a and one from Khalid Habeeb spurred Al Wahdat to an impressive 3-1 victory over arch rivals Al Faisali Friday in the last stage of the Premier League first round to be the unbeaten team with 18 points.

Khalid Awad thrust Al Faisali ahead after 16 minutes before Rababa'a equalised after 20 minutes and the first half became a dramatic succession of rapid counter-attacks that could have given either side victory before the interval.

Rababa'a scored in the 60th minute with a header to boost Al Wahdat's chances with a 2-1 score. Fifteen minutes later, Khalid Habeeb broke away alone outside the box and salmmed Al Wahdat's third goal to reinforce their position in the lead.

Al Ramtha secured their second place after beating lowly Al Karmel 3-1 in Irbid Friday.

Bassam Azaizeh, Khalid Al Aqari and Faiez Bidiewi to raise Al Ramtha's points tally to 14.

With 13 points, Al Ahli finished third after beating Al Jazireh 2-1 at Al Hussein Sport City Wednesday. Imad Fatafeh put Al Ahli in the lead with a strong shot after Al Jazireh's keeper failed to control a cross near the goalmouth.

Fatafeh scored again in the 73rd minute and Ziyad Armeli narrowed the gap by scoring the only goal for Al Jazireh who missed several scoring chances before the final whistle.

Aref Hussein led Al Hussein to a convincing 2-0 win over Al Jeel Thursday. An early lead from Hussein helped his team to break the defensive wall of their rivals.

After repeated attacks on Al Jeel's goal, Hussein scored again after beating an offside trap.

Two first half goals helped Al Arabi to raise their points to 8 by beating Al Qadisiya 2-0 in their match in Irbid Thursday.

Al Arabi, relying on their superior strength in attack, went ahead in the 12th minute with an angled kick from Mansour Al Shara'a before Ahmed Sabah extended the lead with a thrilling header.

The second round matches of the Premier League will resume after the conclusion of the Olympic preliminaries due to be held in Bahrain next month.

French cyclist breaks record

STUTTGART (Agencies) — Francis Moreau of France followed up his professional pursuit victory at the World Cycling Championships by breaking the five-kilometre indoor world record Saturday.

Friday's gold medalist produced a blistering last kilometre to clock five minutes 40.617 seconds.

He beat the previous best mark of 5:40.872 set by Viatcheslav Ekinov of the Soviet Union in Moscow last October.

Moreau was behind Ekinov's time for the first four kilometres and was nearly three seconds off record pace with one kilometre remaining.

The Frenchman, riding alone to comply with the rules for record attempts, averaged 52.895 kph.

Earlier Petra Rossner of Germany overtook American Janie Eickoff in the final lap of the 3,000-metre pursuit Friday to continue the German domination at the World Cycling Championships.

Meanwhile, two Australian cyclists tested positive for illegal substances and will lose their world championship medals, the medical jury of the championships said.

Berlin to show off at September Olympic meeting

BERLIN (AP) — The German capital, bidding to host the summer Olympics in 2000, will put on a glittering cultural show to impress the executive committee of the Olympic Movement, sports officials said Friday.

The 12-member committee, which meets on Sept. 16-19 in Berlin, will be entertained by 12-member cello ensemble and

have dinner in a museum holding one of the supposed seven wonders of the ancient world, the immense Pergamon altar.

Delegates also will be shown a special exhibition of Rembrandt paintings and German President Richard von Weizsacker will host a reception in Bellevue Palace, his official Berlin mansion.

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 18, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A day with no aspects to assist or hinder you so stick to the proven, generous and magnanimous and you will please and delight others by merely expressing warmth and the magnetic quality you possess.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Arrange that trip or meet those new personalities who are able to gain the good will of individuals you wish to know who can help with your advancement.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is your day to make sure you get all you get all your affairs reduced to a workable basis so that others will see your best qualities and give you help.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Now you are able to sit down and thrash out whatever differences of opinion you have with any other individual and get their views on all areas.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Now you can really be more direct in getting at whatever vocational outlets facing you get them behind you quickly to have some peace of mind.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You now have it in your power to have one of your happiest days if you do your project quickly and make appointments for the pleasure you like.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You need a new standpoint of where you are headed in the basis structure of your life and this is the time to think it out and get some helpful support of those close.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Whatever you feel to be the right manner in which to handle those usual daily routines should be just right so do something actual about them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think big now if you want to get big later for the broader the scope of your thinking now the more benefits you can get from such a frame of mind.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is your time to make sure you do most anything you wish so be up and about early and let personal contacts see you are positive in whatever you are doing.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is your time to really show you are the one who does keep quiet about plans that mean so much to you and you work quietly towards making it complete.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is your moment to bring to light whatever social outlets that mean the most to you and you can meet some new acquaintances who can help you get what you want.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You now can find the right means by which to get that highly placed person to give you the backing you need to put that pet project of yours into operation.

Your birth stone = Self confidence

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Amman: Rio De Janeiro Amman: Anna Hotel: 5th circle

THE BETTER HALF

By Barnes

"...and I gave transfusions to a few thousand type-O mosquitoes!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FIMOT
VUCER
TRUFOH
SWEDIT

Answer here: "O O O O O O O O"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: WOVEN EXPEL CRAVAT SYMBOL
Answer: Some people who attend conventions rarely do this—OBSERVE ANY

THE Daily Crossword

by Alvin L. Becker

ACROSS

1. Ballroom dance
2. Rotter
3. Johnny or cold
4. Gr. epic
5. Crude minerals
6. Biblical word
7. Fan
8. —impasse (synonym)
9. Put away
10. Like some tails
11. Squal
12. Wagon tracks
13. Lyric poems
14. Certain soldier
15. Made known
16. Vicinity
17. "—and Lovers" (Lawrence)
18. Lasso
19. Race official
20. Mex. dishes
21. Hogan's kin
22. Word with high or eye
23. Webster or Seely
24. Upright
25. Take for granted
26. Beach hut
27. Gone
28. Aspect
29. With extreme pressure
30. Br. composer
31. "Goodbye" (Calculus)
32. Water wheel
33. Young follower
34. Fencing sword
35. Gave the third
36. Degree
37. Shoulder enhancers
38. McElhannon and Segley
39. 71st Conspicuous
40. Hawk
41. Doh
42. Shaped like a wing
43. Cuckoo
44. Wing party
45. Alleged
46. Inner shell coating
47. Crook traps
48. Cling to
49. Main artery
50. Studied intensely
51. Ruins
52. Heavy cord
53. Mrs. Charles
54. Leslie Carol
55. Eastern campsite

GOREN BRIDGE

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THE ELUSIVE EXTRA CHANCE

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 8 8 3
♥ 7 5 3
♦ A 4
♣ K 5

EAST
♠ 6 4
♥ A 9 6 2
♦ 8 4
♣ 10 7 8 3

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 10 5
♥ 10 4
♦ A J 3
♣ A 3 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass
4♠ Pass 5♠ Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

Be very wary when someone presents you with a diagram including a little "x" for each card below honor rank rather than the actual spotcard itself, and asks how you would play the hand. Just the difference between an expert and a nine could mean the world.

The auction would meet with the approval of even the sternest critic. Declarer could not have asked for a better dummy—three low hearts facing his doubleton meant that every one of partner's cards was working.

The hands fit so well that every addict of the finesse would be a 3-to-

1 favorite to get home. If East held either minor-suit queen, declarer would have 10 easy tricks. Unfortunately, both are wrong, and an excellent contract would suffer the fate of the Titanic.

If we were given the hand with an "x" for each spotcard, that's perhaps the way we would have played it. The key card here is the nine of clubs. That gives us a 3-to-1 chance in clubs alone if we can get the enemy to broach the suit. And a combination play in diamonds is available that would enhance our odds considerably, perhaps even make the contract a laydown.

After ruffing the third heart and drawing trumps, declarer should cash the ace and king of diamonds. If the queen drops, all is well. If not, declarer continues with a diamond to the jack.

Should West have the queen, that defender will be employed on winning the trick. West must lead into declarer's club tenace or concede a ruff-suff, either gives declarer 10 tricks. Should East win the queen of diamonds and attack clubs, the contract comes home if East has either the queen or ten of clubs. Declarer lets the club run around to dummy. If West produces the ten, the table's king wins and declarer still has a finesse of the jack available for the fulfilling trick.

Peanuts

YES, MAAM...WE WANT TO BUY A NEW DOG DISH FOR MY DOG...

METAL OR PLASTIC? RED? YELLOW? BLUE? GEE, I DON'T KNOW...

WHAT KIND OF DISH DO YOU THINK YOU WANT?

FULL!

Andy Capp

TECH! DON'T LET IT GET YOU DOWN, PET!

IT HAD TO HAPPEN SOME TIME!

A LASS ON THE BUS OFFERED HIM HER SEAT!

Mutt'n'Jeff

MUTT, I FINISHED MY ROCKET BOAT! I'M GONNA LAUNCH IT! WHEE! YOU CHRISTEN HER?

THAT'S A BIG BOTTLE FOR MY SMALL CRAFT!

I-IT-IT! I HEREBY CHRISTEN THEE THE...THE...

WHAT DID YOU SAY HER NAME WAS?

I WAS GONNA NAME HER "THE SPRITE" NOW I GUESS I'LL CALL IT "THE JUNK!"

Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE	NEW YORK CLOSE
	15/8/91	16/8/91
Sterling Pound	1.6720	1.6582
Deutsche Mark	1.7485	1.7645
Swiss Franc	1.5365	1.5445
French Franc	5.9480	5.9990
Japanese Yen	137.07	137.11
European Currency Unit	1.1792	1.1625

USD Per STG
European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT
Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Date: 16/8/91

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.62	5.62	5.75	6.00
Sterling Pound	11.00	10.87	10.81	10.68
Deutsche Mark	9.00	9.18	9.25	9.37
Swiss Franc	8.12	8.00	8.00	7.75
French Franc	9.38	9.43	9.56	9.68
Japanese Yen	7.34	7.18	7.00	6.75
European Currency Unit	9.75	9.07	9.45	9.91

Date: 16/8/91

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	358.05	6.95	Silver	4.00	0.05

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 17/8/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.691	.693
Sterling Pound	1.1432	1.1499
Deutsche Mark	.3711	.3931
Swiss Franc	.4468	.4490
French Franc	.1150	.1156
Japanese Yen	.0523	.0548
Dutch Guilder	.3471	.3488
Swedish Krona	.1080	.1085
Italian Lira	.0522	.0525
Belgian Franc	.01900	.01910

Other Currencies
Date: 17/8/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7950	1.8050
Lebanese Lira	.0760	.0775
Saudi Riyal	.1840	.1847
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Qatari Riyal	.1872	.1880
Egyptian Pound	.2200	.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7500	1.7650
UAE Dirham	.1872	.1880
Greek Drachma	.3500	.3600
Cypriot Pound	1.4000	1.4300

CAI Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	7/8/91	14/8/91	15/8/91
All-Share	109.10	109.15	109.15
Banking Sector	103.52	103.01	103.01
Insurance Sector	119.06	118.75	118.75
Industry Sector	114.55	115.46	115.46
Services Sector	126.97	127.38	127.38

Moroccan citrus exports rise 55% to 11-year high

RABAT (R) — Moroccan exports of citrus fruits rose 55 per cent to an 11-year high of 680,000 tonnes in the 1990-91 season, the citrus fruit growers association (ASPAM) has said.

It was the highest since the 1979-88 season, when 770,000 tonnes were sold abroad, including 200,000 tonnes to the Soviet Union. Morocco exported 440,000 in the 1989-90 season.

Clementines, navel oranges and late variety oranges accounted for most of the big increase in last season's exports.

The exports included 130,000 tonnes of clementines, 128,000 tonnes of navel oranges and 332,000 tonnes of late oranges. Comparative figures for 1989-90 were 108,000, 70,000 and 193,000 tonnes.

The association said the increase in late variety orange exports was a surprise because the original estimates were between 220,000 and 240,000 tonnes.

Most exports went to Europe. Other clients included neighbouring Algeria with 50,000 tonnes, the United States with 10,000 tonnes and Hong Kong with nearly 1,000 tonnes.

Tunisia ups incomes of poor to cushion food price hikes

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia has raised allowances for 100,000 poor families by nearly 16 per cent to cushion them against food price rises that took effect Saturday.

The official news agency TAP said the allowances were raised from 47.50 to 55 dinars (dollars) a quarter with effect from the beginning of August.

Minimum wages of labourers were raised by about \$5 a month and for farm workers by \$2.50 a month.

The government increased the controlled prices of basic foods such as bread, cooking oil, pasta and semolina by between 2.7 and 11 per cent with effect from Saturday.

TAP said the price increases were due to a steep rise in the cost of state subsidies from 1.3 million dinars in 1970 to 362 million dinars (dollars) in 1989.

Subsidies had risen sharply because of the higher cost of imported raw materials and the decline of the dinar.

Eastman Kodak plans to cut 3,000 jobs

ROCHESTER, New York (R) — Eastman Kodak Co., the world's largest producer of photographic products, has said it planned to cut about 3,000 of its 134,000 jobs, with most of the reductions expected to come through voluntary early retirement.

The company said the plan and other one-time charges would probably reduce its third-quarter net earnings by \$375 million. Much of that will be paid for out of the company's pension trust, which Kodak said has more money than needed.

In the second quarter, the Rochester-based company, a pioneer in film manufacturing, earned \$357 million on revenues of \$5 billion. Kodak has been hit by lower demand for film and photographic paper during the recession and the Gulf war and by increased competition. The corporation cut about 7,500 workers in a 1989 restructuring.

Chrysler Corp loses \$212m in 2nd quarter

HIGHLAND PARK, Michigan (R) — Chrysler Corp. lost \$212 million in the second quarter, completing the trio of heavy losses among the nation's big three carmakers.

Chrysler said its second-quarter results, which were in the range expected by industry analysts, were hurt by a combination of lower sales, a shift to a less-profitable mix of vehicle models and higher incentive costs.

Despite the steep loss, the third largest U.S. carmaker said the deficit was still a "marked improvement" over the first quarter of 1991, when the company lost \$598 million.

In a statement, Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca attributed the improvement to a stronger economy which in turn helped revive vehicle demand.

"The economy and the industry both showed some improvement in the second quarter as customers slowly came back to the market. That helped our results overall."

Chrysler said the loss came on revenues of \$7.8 billion. In the same period a year ago, the automaker earned \$180 million on \$8.85 billion in revenues.

General Motors Corp. and second-largest Ford Motor Co. reported combined losses of more than \$1 billion for the second quarter. Although the losses were not as heavy as in the first quarter, when the two lost more than \$2 billion, they showed the carmakers are still far from profitability.

China to send officials for Washington talks

BEIJING (R) — Top Chinese trade officials will go to Washington to cool tempers frayed by Beijing's mounting trade surplus and its patchy record on copyright protection, a senior Chinese official said.

"China is taking steps to increase the transparency of its foreign trade policies and regulations," Sun Zhenyu, director of American and Oceanian affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, told the official China daily.

"This is a must in our expansion of economic reforms."

The team, led by vice minister of foreign trade, Tong Zhiguang, and including diplomats and officials from China's customs, patent and copyright offices, leaves Saturday. The officials will hold four days of talks in Washington.

China's ties with the United States, strained by Beijing's bloody 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy protests, have been further shaken by a rancorous dispute over trade issues.

In 1990, China enjoyed its first overall trade surplus since 1983. Its surplus with the United States alone was more than \$10 billion, U.S. statistics showed. Washington fears this could rise to over \$15 billion this year.

The surplus figures prominently in U.S. congressional debate this year over extending China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trade status, which gives the lowest possible tariffs to Chinese exports.

Last month, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate voted to impose conditions on China to be met before MFN was renewed for 1992, including improvements in human rights.

A final version of the bill has not been sent to President George Bush, who has promised to veto the legislation.

China is growing increasingly worried about the trade squabble.

"We understand that Sino-U.S. trade is of great concern to the U.S. Congress and government," Mr. Sun was quoted as saying. "We welcome such an opportunity to make bilateral consultations and we hope something positive will come out of the meeting."

China was working to expand its imports from the United States as a means of cutting the imbalance, Mr. Sun said.

"We have stopped the downward trend of our imports from the U.S., which dropped 16 per cent in 1990," he said. Chinese customs figures showed U.S. imports rose 6.2 per cent in the first half of 1991 compared with the same 1990 period, he said.

Bahrain offshore banking assets fall sharply

MANAMA (R) — Assets of offshore banking units (OBUS) in Bahrain's financial centre declined 14 per cent to \$51.5 billion during the first quarter of 1991, the lowest level since 1981, figures have showed.

The Bahrain Monetary Agency (BMA) quarterly report said assets of the island's 51 OBU's — which like other banks in the area were hit by loss of confidence following the Gulf crisis — fell by \$8.4 billion in the first three months of 1991.

Total assets had stood at \$59.9 billion at end-December 1990 and at \$73.33 billion at end-March 1990.

Confidence has been returning to the area since U.S.-led forces drove Iraq out of Kuwait last February.

But the number of OBU's operating in Bahrain, the Middle East's main financial centre, has continued to decline. There were OBU's in Bahrain at the height of the oil boom more than a decade ago.

The BMA report assets of the 19 commercial banks in Bahrain edged 4.3 per cent higher to 1.952 billion dinars (\$5.2 billion) at end-March 1991 from 1.871 billion dinars (\$4.96 billion) at the end of December.

But this year's first quarter was lower than the end-March 1990 level of 2.085 billion dinars (\$5.53 billion).

Private sector deposits rose 5.7 per cent to \$72.6 million dinars (\$2.31 million) during the first quarter of 1991 from \$75.5 million (\$2.19 billion) at end-December 1990.

Public sector deposits also increased 6.7 per cent to \$45.8 million dinars (\$1.45 billion) in the first three months of 1991 from \$11.1 million (\$1.36 billion) at end-December 1990.

Assets of the BMA declined to \$34.34 million dinars (\$1.42 billion) during the first quarter of 1991 from \$42.78 million (\$1.44 billion) at the end of 1990.

But total assets were up on the end-March 1990 level of \$20.94 million (\$1.38 billion).

Albania stops foreign exchange dealing after losses

TIRANA (R) — Albania's coalition government has closed down the Albanian state bank's foreign exchange department after it ran up losses of \$170 million, the daily newspaper Zeri i Popullit has reported.

The losses emerged after an inspection of the central bank, carried out with the help of the International Monetary Fund, said the paper, which is the organ of the former Communist Socialist Party, the biggest member of the coalition.

The losses, run up since 1988, are half the size of the \$343 million trade deficit posted in the first half of this year by Albania, Europe's poorest country.

The paper quoted a government spokesman as saying that the bank's foreign exchange section had been acting without any financial controls.

"They have irresponsibly conducted hard-currency operations which were beyond the country's financial possibilities and sometimes were of a speculative character," he said.

"Moreover the losses caused by this activity from 1988 to 1990 were hidden systematically and in a speculative way," he noted.

He added that the losses threatened the bank's ability to meet its payments obligations, undermining its position on the world market.

The coalition government is taking Albania towards a market economy and political pluralism after nearly five decades of orthodox communism ended last year said popular unrest.

Under the communist system, foreign trade was a state monopoly and financial activity was frowned upon. But the authorities set up a small foreign exchange operation to service foreign trade.

The government has decided to close down foreign exchange activity in the state bank and pass the matter to the investigating authorities, the spokesman was quoted as saying.

Albania will soon publish a series of measures to promote foreign investment and trade.

Ylli Cabiri, minister of internal economic cooperation, has told Albanian radio that a foreign investments agency would be set up in Tirana soon "to correctly orientate foreigners who would like to invest in Albania."

The ministry is striving to lift barriers impeding foreign investors, and the government has approved laws and decrees, to be issued soon, which will help in this direction, he said.

They involve lower customs duties and will make it easier for foreigners to set up joint ventures or private enterprises.

They will allow state and private enterprises to use hard currency in trade and end the state monopoly on foreign trade.

Mr. Cabiri said 26 joint ventures have been created so far in Albania and several middle-size projects with foreign investments have already started. He gave no details.

The official Albanian news agency ATA said that the inspection team investigating the foreign exchange losses at the state bank had not found any concrete proof of deception or abuses perpetrated for personal profit.

Kuwait plans to halve number of banks to 4 starting next month

KUWAIT (R) — The central bank has said it plans to make Kuwait's eight banks into four banks from September to help them operate profitably against competition.

Governor Salem Abdul Aziz Al Saud Al Sabah told Reuters in an interview the merger would be complete early next year.

"It will be in their interest to merge, otherwise they will not be able to compete domestically or internationally. I would like to have a number of banks in Kuwait not exceeding four at the beginning for at least three to four years until the situation improves and then they can expand," he said.

The central bank was fully committed to supporting the banks but mergers offered the best solution. The aim was to increase efficiency and broaden the banks' capital base.

"I am worried if they do not merge, they have certain criteria to meet, and they cannot meet them," he said.

Kuwait's banking system is burdened with debts of \$18 billion and only one of the six commercial banks, the National Bank of Kuwait, is in good financial health.

The problem dates back to the crash in 1982 of the unofficial Souk Al Manakh secondary stock market. The banks had 40 per cent of their investment portfolio tied up in the market.

The central bank interviewed to help them after the crash.

Sheikh Salem said Kuwait was overbanked and the number of branches had to be drastically reduced. Foreign banks would only be allowed to operate in the emirate after the local banks had put their house in order.

Iraq's invasion last year led to an exodus which has reduced the population of Kuwait by half to about one million. This was eroded the banks' client base.

In addition to the six commercial banks, Kuwait has two specialised banks which would be included in the merger, Sheikh Salem said.

The government has a controlling stake in only two of the banks — Burgan and the Bank of

Kuwait and the Middle East.

The other six banks are outside the control of the government, which maintains a stake of between five and 30 per cent in each of them.

Sheikh Salem did not say which banks would take over the others in the merger.

Kuwait's banks had total assets of 11 billion dinars (\$37 billion) with private sector deposits totalling 4.8 billion dinars (\$16 billion) according to the governor.

The banks faced a real test of investor confidence on Aug. 3 when the central bank lifted restrictions on cash withdrawals and the transfer of funds abroad.

Bankers said fears of a massive run on the banks proved premature and there were no serious effect on the deposits.

The central bank, fearing a flight of capital, imposed a monthly ceiling of 4,000 dinars (\$13,500) on withdrawals after the emirate was liberated on Feb. 28.

The limit was eased in June before being scrapped.

Delta makes itself a global airline with Pan Am deal

ATLANTA (R) — Delta Air Lines Inc., which started 67 years ago as a crop-dusting service, has propelled itself into the ranks of global carriers with its \$1.4 billion deal to buy Pan Am Corp., experts have said.

Delta, known for its conservative, paternalistic corporate culture rooted in America's deep south, is likely to face some near-term turbulence from the mammoth task of taking over Pan Am's European operation, transatlantic routes and northeastern U.S. shuttle, airline analysts said.

Delta won bankruptcy court approval Monday to buy most of Pan Am for \$1.4 billion. The cash-starved Pan Am was forced into bankruptcy protection last January.

By taking a 45 per cent stake in a slimmer Pan Am, the Atlanta-based carrier, now ranked as the

number three U.S. airline, faces other new travellers challenges in extending its reach through plans to feed travellers into Pan Am's Miami hub, which serves Latin America and the Caribbean.

But despite problems of culture clash and adjustment that are typical in acquisitions, experts said Delta's ability to make prior mergers profitable and the rich opportunities in global markets should make the deal a long-term success.

Delta built itself from a major southern airline to a national carrier by acquiring Northeast Airlines in 1972 and Western Airlines in 1987.

Formed from the nucleus of a crop-dusting service that started in Georgia in 1924 and moved to Louisiana the next year, Delta began passenger service in 1929, moved to Atlanta in 1941 and was

awarded its first routes to Europe in 1978.

With a mostly non-union workforce, Delta is known as paternalistic with employees, conservative, service-oriented and among the more profitable players in an industry transformed by deregulation in the 1970s. Chairman Row Allen and President Whit Hawkins both rose from company ranks.

In the 1982 recession, flight attendants organised a campaign to buy the company a new Boeing 767 in gratitude for management policy of avoiding layoffs despite weak business.

Delta made record profits in the late 1980s, but lost \$324 million on revenues of \$9.2 billion in the fiscal year that ended June 30, which saw a huge decline in travel caused by the recession and the Gulf war.

Soviet Union seeks more bilateral tax treaties

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet Union is seeking to negotiate bilateral tax treaties with as many countries as possible to avoid double-taxation, Deputy Finance Minister Vladimir Rodyshevskiy has said.

He said Moscow should reach accords with other countries to ensure that each other's nationals did not pay taxes both at home and abroad.

"We have already concluded such agreement with about 20 countries... we want to conclude as many as possible," he told a round-table discussion on Soviet foreign economic links.

The Kremlin, trying to improve the business climate for foreign investors, has signed tax treaties recently with South Korea, Greece, Turkey and Luxembourg.

"We may soon conclude a similar agreement with the United States... we are considering about 10 proposals from other countries," Mr. Rodyshevskiy said.

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American Community School

The American Community School announces a new programme for 4 and 5 year olds for the 1991-92 school year. The new K-1 and K-2 class will provide a developmental programme with appropriate learning activities for each age group. The emphasis will be on presenting creative lessons designed to allow the pre-school and kindergarten age child to develop socially, physically, emotionally and academically in a positive environment.

Classes will be five days per week from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. A reduced tuition and capital assessment rate will apply. Bus transportation is available for an additional fee.

Please contact ACS (813944-6) for additional information.

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9½ WEEKS

Show: 3:30, 6:45, 10:30 p.m.

PRINCIPAL

Show: 5:10, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema NIJOM Tel: 675571

To Be Opened Soon

Nabil Mashini Theatre

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema PHILADELPHIA Tel: 634144

Sean Connery & Christopher Lambert...in HIGH LANDER II

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30.

Cinema RAINBOW Tel: 625155

TOM SELLECK — IN RUNAWAY

Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

South African peace process back on rails

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's "democracy train" appears to be on track again behind a general amnesty for political exiles and a tentative agreement to end township warfare, political analysts said Saturday.

"These two long overdue developments augur well for talks on a democratic constitution," said Phil Mtimku, a political scientist at the University of South Africa.

The government this week announced an agreement with the United Nations to grant amnesty to thousands who fled apartheid over the past 30 years. So far it has permitted only selective amnesties for returning exiles, and then only for the crime of leaving the country illegally.

ANC publicity chief Pall Jordan told reporters: "It makes a change and is all for the better. But the government still has to deliver on other undertakings it has made."

Also this week, the government, the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party reached a consensus on ways to end violence in black townships which has killed more than 2,000 people in the past 11 months.

The ANC had listed an amnesty to all exiles and an end to township violence as major conditions for starting talks with the government on a non-racial constitution.

stitution.

The Saturday Star newspaper said: "If the agreement between Pretoria and the United Nations lives up to expectations, the government action is laudable... if the exiles issue is indeed about to be resolved, there is cause to hope that, domino-like, the outstanding problems will fall away."

Township violence reached epidemic proportions between April and June this year, prompting the ANC to pull out of democracy talks with the government until reformist President F.W. de Klerk took steps to halt it.

Now, says political analyst Mervyn Frost, "there is real possibility that round-table constitutional talks could get going within weeks."

Improving relations between the government and the predominantly black opposition were poisoned last month when the government admitted it secretly funded the conservative Inkatha to counter the more radical ANC's influence in the townships.

The scandal, dubbed "Inkathagate" led to the demotion of two cabinet ministers.

Some analysts warn that constitutional talks could still be sabotaged by pro-apartheid white militants.

"They will often be a nuisance," Mr. Mtimku said, referring to the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement which had three members killed in clashes with police a week ago. "But they won't stop the democracy train."

The ANC said Friday it had released all South African government spies in its custody, some of them trained assassins.

It said in a statement that 32 of the "most notorious" agents would return by air to Johannesburg on a flight from Nairobi Saturday and would be handed to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The statement gave no details of where they had been held. It was issued hours after Pretoria and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) initialled an accord clearing the way for the return of thousands of exiles. The pact included an amnesty for political crimes.

The ANC statement said that over the past 16 years the movement had uncovered within its ranks a number of agents acting on behalf of Pretoria's security services.

"Among them were a number of specially trained killers and assassins, who perpetrated exceedingly gruesome murders in South Africa and the frontline states," it said.

The ANC had decided in February to release them all and this process was now complete, the statement said.



A Yugoslav federal army soldier and an officer take cover behind a tank in a Croatian village as they come under sniper attack from nearby roofs.

Yugoslav forces clash with Serbs; EC observers come under attack

BELGRADE (R) — Fresh fighting erupted Saturday between security forces and Serbian guerrillas in a new zone of conflict in Croatia where European Community (EC) observers had a narrow escape after bullets hit their helicopter.

Croatian officials said guerrillas resumed an attack on the town of Okucani, 120 kilometres east of the Croatian capital Zagreb, after an overnight lull but gave no other details.

At least one Croatian policeman was killed Friday in a battle which started when guerrillas mortar-shelled the town, in the hitherto peaceful area of western Slavonia where local Serbs declared autonomy earlier in the week.

Zagreb's Interior Ministry said six of its police and nine civilians were injured in what it called the 94th breach of a 10-day-old ceasefire in the republic called by Yugoslavia's federal presidency.

No figures were available for possible Serbian casualties. EC officials on an observer mission had a narrow escape Friday when bullets smashed the windows and radio of their helicopter, which had flown too close to the fighting zone.

The two observers and two crew from the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Italy, landed safely in a nearby field.

It was unclear if they had been shot at deliberately. But an EC

spokesman said the 12-member bloc would protest to federal authorities in Belgrade, who pledged to guarantee the monitors' safety when they were invited to Yugoslavia in July.

"We are going to express our concern and press for an investigation," he said.

The 50-strong team of civilian monitors, whose distinctive white clothes and white vehicles carry the blue and gold EC flag, said they were carrying on work as normal Saturday despite the incident.

An official spokesman for the mission in Zagreb was unavailable to comment on why the helicopter had been in eastern Croatia. Dutch officials said it had been heading for Belgrade.

The monitors' mandate was to observe compliance with a ceasefire between the federal army and local defence forces in the rebel northern Republic of Slovenia, which like Croatia declared independence on June 25.

More than 300 people have died in fighting since June 25 in the two republics, most of them in clashes between Croatian forces and Serbian guerrillas who have been extending areas of Croatia under their control.

In Croatia, the monitors were supposed only to observe related movements, such as the return to barracks of army units deployed in Slovenia.

A later attempt to extend their

operations to cover the fighting between Serbs and Croats failed. A special EC envoy, Henry Wijnandts, the Dutch ambassador to France, was due to meet Croatian President Franjo Tudjman in Zagreb Saturday to urge renewed peace efforts.

Zagreb Television said five Croatian National Guards and several civilians had been taken hostage by guerrillas in Okucani. A photographer at the scene said that strong Croatian forces, including armoured vehicles, had massed around the town.

The Yugoslav News Agency, Tanjug, said Croatian forces had blocked off major roads around Okucani and the area was tense. It said many Serbs from the area had fled their homes.

Croats form the majority in ethnically-mixed western Slavonia. Serbian guerrillas say they are defending the wish of Croatia's 600,000-strong Serbian minority to stay in the 72-year-old multi-ethnic Yugoslavia state.

Saturday's renewed fighting is another blow to federal leaders' hopes that the ceasefire could hold, smoothing the way for political talks on the future of the divided state of 23.5 million people.

These are due to begin in Belgrade next Tuesday and involve the presidents of Yugoslavia's six feuding republics as well as the eight-man collective presidency. Previous talks have collapsed.

Republics offer mediation in Soviet ethnic conflict

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President Boris Yeltsin and Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev have offered to mediate in a bloody conflict between the Soviet Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Soviet News Agency (TASS) said Saturday the two leaders were ready to help restore peace in the disputed southern territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, where more than 800 people have been killed in the past three years.

The offer was made in a joint message to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, after talks between Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Nazarbayev, leaders of the two biggest republics, in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata.

The message made no specific reference to about 40 Soviet soldiers being held hostage by Armenian militants demanding the release of fellow Armenians imprisoned by Azerbaijan, which accuses them of terrorism.

"Yeltsin and Nazarbayev suggest undertaking vigorous efforts to organise without any preconditions direct talks between the leaders of the warring parties," TASS said.

They said talks should be attended by Mr. Gorbachev and cover every aspect of the dispute, including ceasefire terms.

They offered to act as guarantors of compliance with the terms of any peace accord, saying: "The logic of such actions is dictated by the unacceptability of further escalation of the fratricidal war."

They said Soviet troops should not be involved in passport checks in Azerbaijan, which Armenia says are being used as a pretext for harassment and deportation of its nationals.

The Soviet Interior Ministry warned Thursday it was prepared to use force to free the soldiers held in Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave claimed by both republics.

The region is located in an area administered by Azerbaijan but is populated mostly by Armenians.

The Armenian militants released three of their Soviet hostages Friday. Negotiations continued to secure the release of the others.

TASS said Soviet troop reinforcements were being drafted into the village of Aterk where the hostages are being held.

The Armenians have suggested that imprisoned rebels be transferred to Yeltsin's Russian Federation, where their alleged crimes would be investigated by republican authorities.

In a separate development, Alexander Yakovlev, one of Mr. Gorbachev's closest advisers and philosopher behind many of his reforms, has joined millions of countrymen who quit the Communist Party.

Mr. Yakovlev's departure Friday came a day after a party commission recommended he be expelled for helping form the Democratic Reform Movement, a loose coalition that may challenge the ruling Communists.

COLUMN

Girl saved after 10 minutes under water

OSLO (AP) — An American physician pulled an unconscious girl from a lake and revived her after she had been submerged more than 10 minutes in a boating accident, newspapers reported Friday.

Dagbladet, a major Oslo daily, devoted its front page to the story and said Gerald Kiedrowski of Fargo, North Dakota, was a hero. "I was just doing my job," Dr. Kiedrowski said.

The 10-year-old girl had stopped breathing and her heart had stopped beating before the doctor leaned over the side of a lifeboat Thursday and pulled her out. Crewmen held his ankles as he ducked under the surface of chilly Lake Mjøsa in southern Norway. Police in the mountain town of Lillehammer said the girl remained unconscious but in stable condition in hospital Friday. Her name was not released. "I think she is going to be fine," Dr. Kiedrowski said.

"Six years ago I saved a boy who had been underwater for 45 minutes. Now he's completely normal," Dr. Kiedrowski of St. Johns Hospital in Fargo, was in Norway with his son's ice hockey team. He was sightseeing aboard an old paddle-wheeler, Skibladner, when a 6-metre long sailboat became tangled in the paddle wheels and capsized. The sailboat's 66-year-old Norwegian owner, bleeding from a facial injury, clung to the boat's upturned keel and was rescued by a man in a motorboat. His granddaughter and a dog were trapped in the motorboat. The man in the motorboat shouted that he saw a girl under the water. Kiedrowski got into the lifeboat lowered by Skibladner crewmen and they rowed to the wreck. "I could just see the girl about a metre under the surface," Kiedrowski said. "I had to convince the others that there was still hope. Small children have a so-called 'diver reflex' that ensures blood to the heart and brain during long periods under cold water." Kiedrowski began artificial respiration and showed a crewman how to perform heart massage while the lifeboat headed for a lakeside ambulance.

"That trip to land seemed awfully long," he said. As the lifeboat reached a dock, the girl's heart began to beat on its own. Firemen who returned later to clear the wreckage heard whining. They cut a hole in the hull and pulled out a soaked but overjoyed golden retriever dog, which had apparently found an air pocket.

Charles reveals a naked ambition

LONDON (AP) — Prince Charles has told students that he would like to draw a nude model, but was worried about what the press would make of such an endeavour. The prince was in Oxford speaking to students at the architecture summer school he established to promote his vision of architecture on a human scale and in tune with its surroundings. Students at the school, who come from around the world, spend three weeks at Magdalen College, Oxford, and three weeks in Italy. As well as drawings buildings, students at the school sketch plants and nudes to improve their sense of proportion and perspective.

Chinese student Doreen Liu told reporters Prince Charles said he would like to be able to draw nudes as well. But according to Ms. Liu, 23, he said he thought it wise to resist the temptation "because he was afraid he would be on the news." While Prince Charles was at Oxford, his grandmother, queen mother, welcomed other members of the royal family to a traditional summer gathering at her home in Caithness, Scotland. She offered a special greeting to Princes Ann for her 41st birthday.

Soviet scientists engineer new milk colours

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet scientists have developed genetic engineering methods to produce radically new colours in milk for Western fashion markets, the Soviet newspaper Izvestia has said.

Izvestia described milk displayed by scientist Oleg Trapeznov at a small experimental farm in Siberia as unprecedented in the world market. "It's like a black crystal and that's exactly what we've named it," it quoted Mr. Trapeznov as saying. The report said the methods used at the farm opened the way to development of many new colours, though it was not clear when these could be produced on a commercial basis.

Gunman kills 6, himself in Australian mall

STRATHFIELD, Australia (AP) — A masked man with an automatic rifle and a machete shot or hacked six people to death in a crowded suburban shopping mall Saturday before killing himself, police said.

Eight people were hospitalised with gunshot wounds, including four in critical condition. Three others were being treated for shock.

Doug Kelly, chief superintendent for Blacktown District Police, told reporters at the Strathfield Plaza there was no indication of a motive or whether the unidentified man knew any of the victims.

"There doesn't appear to be any rhyme or reason for it," he said. "It was a horrendous killing and we are going to be unraveling details all night."

Police said the man used a machete to hack a woman to death in a mall coffee shop at the shopping centre in Strathfield, an upper middle-class suburb on Sydney's West Side.

Wearing a stocking cap, he then used a high-powered rifle to shoot four other people in the coffee shop and another in the mall before going to the upper-level parking garage.

"He fired a number of indiscriminate shots at the people below," Mr. Kelly said.

One of the wounded was hit at the railway station. Sydney's busiest suburban transport hub, about 100 metres away. The man then turned the gun on himself.

Mr. Kelly said the dead included four women and three men, "including what we believe to be the offender."

"He used the machete on one of the victims. It looked like a young girl. It's a terrible scene in there... terrible..." Mr. Kelly said.

level parking garage.

highly publicised burnings of narcotics and refinery equipment, the government of Burma did not demonstrate a comprehensive interest in narcotics law enforcement in 1990.

Opium production, the report said, was nearly twice as large as that of two years earlier.

Burma's military seized power in 1988, when soldiers shot dead hundreds and possibly thousands of peaceful pro-democracy demonstrators. The opposition National League for Democracy won the 1989 elections but the junta has refused to transfer power. Most of the party's leaders have been jailed.

"Burma's military rulers have reached agreements with a number of insurgent groups which permit continued poppy cultivation, heroin productions and narcotics trafficking in the short term in return for peace and long-term rural development and crop substitution projects," the report said.

The general apparently was referring to the United States, which in July imposed economic sanctions on Burma because of its lack of progress in curbing the flow of narcotics and in easing political repression.

The U.S. government said in a March report that "despite three

State-run Radio Madagascar said the five provinces of Antsiranana, Fianarantsoa, Mahajanga, Toamasina and Toamasina were setting up provisional governments within a greater federal union headed by the 54-year-old Ratsiraka.

Mr. Ratsiraka has faced weeks of mounting opposition pressure to resign after 16 years in office. A general strike called by the opposition active forces coalition has virtually paralysed the island.

Political analysts said the initiative was an attempt by Mr. Ratsiraka to outmanoeuvre the

lowest vote ever.

In the 62 years since it was formed the PRI has been accused of rigging countless federal and state elections to maintain its stranglehold on power, and Mr. Salinas himself has been dogged by accusations that his government is the result of fraud.

Though he has repeatedly said he is committed to clean politics, Mr. Salinas called out police and troops to halt protests against alleged electoral fraud in local elections last year, and the PRI's sweep of state congressional seats and 121 mayoralships in the state of Mexico last November drew widespread charges of vote-rigging.

In Sunday's elections six governorships, half the 64-seat Senate and the entire Congress are at stake and polls show the PRI, yet again, routing its left and right-wing opponents.

Electoral reforms, including new voter roles and identification cards, transparent ballot boxes and a new federal electoral institute, were approved by Congress last year to ensure that the poll — the first nationwide race since Mr. Salinas took office — will be free and fair.

The electorate remains sceptical, however, and analysts say this is sure to be reflected in a high degree of absenteeism despite a last-minute appeal by Mr. Salinas for Mexicans to vote and strengthen their "democratic institu-

Rural England explodes in race riots

TELFORD, England (R) — An outbreak of race-related violence in a rural English town this week has shocked many Britons and added a new dimension to a problem usually associated with the inner cities.

About 100 mostly black and Asian youths stoned police cars, smashed shop windows and tried to set fire to a local police station in a suburb of Telford, central England, Monday and Tuesday after police shot dead a man of West Indian origin.

The mother of the dead man said Friday, she would sue the police for alleged negligence.

"I've lived here all my life and this has never happened before," said Telford resident Desmond Spence, 23. "The blacks have never come together like this before."

Such major race-related violence has not been seen since 1981, when hundreds of black youths rampaged through the streets of Brixton, south London, shouting about alleged police harassment and discrimination.

Later that year, riots also broke out in Tooting, in Liverpool, and other urban centres.

The Telford violence prompted experts to express fears that similar eruptions could occur elsewhere in rural areas, not just in urban Britain.

"I would not want it thought that what happened in Telford could not happen elsewhere. There are all sorts of places with sizeable ethnic communities," said Peter Sanders, head of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), a government watchdog.

Mr. Sanders said the Telford events had "come out of the blue" but warned racial tension was not limited to cities.

Police in Telford have launched an inquiry into the shooting of 24-year-old Ian Gordon, who had a history of psychiatric disorders. He was pointing an unloaded air-pistol at police when he was shot by marksmen.

Local residents say relations between the local black and Asian and the white community have long been tense. Others accuse the police of harassment.

"Black and white are fighting all the time," he said. "Everyone knows there's racism," said Mr. Spence, who is black.

Another resident, Colin Dorell, accused the police of harassing the people of Hadley.

Elections test pace of political reform in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexicans vote Sunday in mid-term elections seen as a referendum on the economic reforms of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and a test of whether he can match economic transformation with deep political change.

Mr. Salinas has won widespread praise for the economic reforms that have slashed inflation, spurred up public finances and spurred 4.8 per cent economic growth during the first half of 1991.

But he has also been criticised, at home and abroad, for failing to add "glasnost" or serious democratic reform to his economic project, dubbed "Salinastrotika" by the Mexican press.

Mexico's political system has made it the most stable country in Latin America, and Mr. Salinas's economic policies have lured foreign investment that boosted its capital accounts surplus to \$8.72 billion during the first half of 1991.

But the country now stands alone with Cuba as the last bastion of one-party rule in Latin America — and democratic changes elsewhere in the region have made it look more and more like a political anachronism.

Mr. Salinas came to the presidency through disputed elections in 1988 in which the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) — the longest-ruling party outside of the Communist world — received its

lowest vote ever.

In the 62 years since it was formed the PRI has been accused of rigging countless federal and state elections to maintain its stranglehold on power, and Mr. Salinas himself has been dogged by accusations that his government is the result of fraud.

Though he has repeatedly said he is committed to clean politics, Mr. Salinas called out police and troops to halt protests against alleged electoral fraud in local elections last year, and the PRI's sweep of state congressional seats and 121 mayoralships in the state of Mexico last November drew widespread charges of vote-rigging.

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tions."

Mr. Salinas appears to enjoy a high approval rating thanks to his economic policies, including a high-profile programme to eradicate extreme poverty.

His move to negotiate a free trade agreement between Mexico, the United States and Canada has raised the stakes for Sunday's race. Any sign that the PRI is up to its old tricks could provide powerful ammunition to opponents of the trade pact in the U.S. Congress and Canadian parliament.

A high government official said Mr. Salinas had personally ordered state governors and other authorities "to guarantee clean elections" in a series of recent meetings.

Meanwhile, a self-described prostitute is fighting for the rights of the social outcasts who live and work on the mean streets of Mexico City in her bid for election to the city's District Assembly in Sunday polls.

Her candidacy has received surprisingly little attention in the Mexican media, most likely because it is just the sort of thing people in this predominantly Roman Catholic nation would rather not talk about.

But Claudia Colimoro, 35, candidate of the left-wing Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) for a seat on Mexico City District Assembly, says she has already

made history by becoming the first woman in Latin America who has gone into politics as an admitted prostitute.

"I had my doubts at first about entering politics," Ms. Colimoro, clad in a skin-tight red and black mini-skirt with matching earrings, told Reuters.

"But now I do it with pleasure and anger — anger for not having done it before, for not having dared before," she said in a husky voice.

Ms. Colimoro says an enormous stigma is attached to prostitution in Mexico — "we're forced to lead double lives" — and one of her campaign promises is to fight for legalisation of the trade.

"Being legal it would just be another profession, it would end the corruption, the extortion and the acts of violence," she said, referring to abuses by the police and other authorities.

She calls for the creation of free night schools for prostitutes and nurseries for their children and pushes the plan as she walks the sidewalks stopping in cafes and restaurants in the capital.

The platform also includes calls for the legalisation of abortion, AIDS and sex education in primary school, wholesale promotion of condoms and vasectomies, truly free education for everyone and government housing and job opportunities for Mexico City's hoards of street children.

John 12:12